

LOGIC AND THE IMPERIAL STOA

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JONATHAN BARNES

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BY

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FOR ANTHONY KENNY

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PREFACE

This piece began life as a seminar paper. It became a couple of lectures. The lectures were worked into an article. The article grew, as articles grow. And it turned into a monograph. A word of excuse might be sought.

First, the title: Logic and the imperial Stoa. Chronologically, the argument is determined by the overlapping careers of three Stoics: Seneca, who died in his sixties in 65 A.D.; Epictetus, who was a boy when Seneca slashed his wrists, and who perhaps lived on into the 130s; and Marcus Aurelius, born in 121 and ruler of the Empire from 161 to 180.

The same three Stoics determine the content of the monograph—Marcus introduces the comedy; Seneca features in the second act; and Epictetus is the hero. Three other figures might have expected to star: Sextus Empiricus, who flourished in the middle of the second century; Galen, born in 129 and dead by about 210; and Alexander of Aphrodisias, whose *floruit* is conventionally set at the beginning of the third century. For all three of these men wrote at length on logic: they were competent logicians themselves, and they are (so chance has arranged it) sources of the first importance for our present knowledge of Stoic logic. Nonetheless, none of the three plays more than a cameo role here; for none of them was a Stoic—and it was my aim not to set down all that is known and all that can decently be surmised about Stoic logic under the early empire, but rather to look at imperial Stoic logic through the eyes of imperial Stoic authors and in the pages of imperial Stoic texts.

The monograph is offered as a contribution to the ancient history of logic. I confess that its more logical parts contain little in the way of history and that its more historical parts say little about the stuff and matter of logic. The history is in any event external rather than internal; that is to say, it concerns less the development and career of logic itself than the attitudes which imperial Stoics took to the subject. I should like to write an internal history of Stoic logic; but that cannot be done on the basis of the texts with which this monograph is concerned—if indeed it can be done at all.

The subject, I fear, will excite scepticism or aversion. Scepticism in those of my near colleagues who share a passion for long dead logicians. Aversion in a larger population—for to many, logic seems as arid and forbidding as the Gobi desert.

To the sceptics I avow that I once was a sceptic myself: the subject deserves a footnote, certainly; a short article, perhaps; but a monograph? a whole book? There is too little material, and the material—such as it is—is gossamer. Well, I took the thing up as a wager. Whether or not the bet was won, I persuaded myself that the subject was, after all, good for a hundred pages of print. And I am sanguine enough to hope that some at least of my fellow fans will be induced to allow that the material has more substance to it than an initial glance may suggest.

As for the larger population, I have done what I can to make the book unforbidding. (And unarid—for what author does not hope, and secretly expect, that his book will seduce more readers than the Bible or the best of Mills and Boon?) The logical issues which I discuss are none of them esoteric; and I have discussed them in plain prose, spurning the aid of the symbolism of modern mathematical logic. (The Stoics themselves, after all, did not develop any symbolism: like the Peripatetics, they used Greek—a semi-technical and semi-formalized Greek—and any thoughts which a modern interpretation ascribes to them should in principle be capable of comprehensible expression in more or less ordinary Greek, and therefore in more or less ordinary English.) Some people, to be sure, have no taste for logic at all; and for them I can do nothing. But if you are not disgusted by the very idea of a syllogism, then you will find nothing in this book to fox you. (Save, perhaps, the several errors which I have made and overlooked.)

I add that the body of the text presupposes only the most minimal background knowledge. I expect readers to know that Chrysippus came after Aristotle, A.D. after B.C. Any other, more *recherché*, historical information which is needed to understand the argument is (in principle, at least) supplied in the text. Again, although some footnotes assume a knowledge of Greek (and of Latin), the text itself does not: everything foreign is done into English.

All this has made the book longer than it would otherwise have been. Moreover, I have been prodigal in quoting ancient texts. Many readers—if I may generalize from my own idle habits—rarely look a reference up (and when they do so, they are often surprised or disappointed). If a text matters to the argument, then it is best to cite it. And if this pads out the discussion, then let there be padding.

The paper from which the monograph began was given some years ago to an Oxford seminar. There were the usual sharp comments at the time; and afterwards Miriam Griffin sent me a sheaf of notes which corrected various errors and supplemented various lacunae. The lectures were given in Florence in 1995, under the auspices of the Erasmus programme. I am grateful to my Florentine audience for their intelligent questions and pertinent remarks. And I am particularly grateful to Antonina Alberti, who organised the affair.

I have accumulated several other debts, most of which (such is the way with debts) I no longer remember. But I am sure that I have stolen several things from two papers by Susanne Bobzien; and I know that I am indebted to two Genevan colleagues, Maddalena Bonelli and Ben Morison, who discussed certain crucial texts with me, producing a number of new suggestions and preserving me from a number of old blunders. In addition, Robert Dobbin, who is preparing a commentary on the first book of Epictetus' *Discourses*, was obliging enough to read a draft of the whole piece; and Gudrun Tausch-Pebody gave me valuable bibliographical support at a late stage in the production. The editors of *Philosophia Antiqua* helped me to remove several errors from the penultimate version; Paul Slomkowski generously detected some fifty errors in what I had taken to be the final version; Job Lisman, of E.J.Brill, guided me with patience and understanding through the tedious process of preparing camera ready copy. Finally, I thank Sylvie Germain, mistress of the Genevan Philosophy Library, who does not blench at my most exotic requests.

JB
Geneva
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CHAPTER ONE

THE DECLINE OF LOGIC

Marcus Aurelius did not much care for logic. He thanked Rusticus—Quintus Iunius Rusticus, statesman and Stoic—that he had ‘not been diverted into an enthusiasm for sophistry or into writing books about theorems or delivering protreptic little arguments’ (I vii 2); and he thanked the gods themselves that ‘when I longed for philosophy I did not fall in with a sophist or sit down and write books¹ or analyse syllogisms—or spend my time on meteorology’ (I xvii 22). After all, he reflected, you will no more find happiness in a deduction than in riches or reputation (VIII i 5).

Now Marcus was a philosopher, and a Stoic philosopher.² Philosophy—and in particular Stoic philosophy—divided itself into the three disciplines of logic, physics, and ethics.³ But Marcus would love neither physics nor logic, he would be neither φυσικός nor διαλεκτικός (VII lxxvii 3): ethics was his oyster.

He had, it seems, once felt the allure of the syllogism. At any rate, when his tutor Fronto feared that the young man was abandoning rhetoric for philosophy, it was logic in particular which seemed to be the fascination and the danger (*eloq* iv 5 [p.149 van den Hout²]). Fronto did his best: after all, he asked, ‘is there anything you retain from those logicians of yours? Is there anything you are *pleased* that you retain?’ (*eloq* ii 17 [p.144 van den Hout²]). Logic is a villainous study, done in villainous Greek (§ 13 [p.141]); and Fronto called as witness his friend Dionysius, a rhetorician who had once composed, against the logicians, a witty fable on the vine and the

¹ Reading ‘τοῦ συγγράφειν’ (Reiske): ‘τοὺς συγγραφεῖς’ codd.

² On Marcus’ Stoicism see e.g. Brunt [1974]; Rist [1982]. – References to modern literature are normally given by author’s name, date of publication, and page number: full details in the Bibliography. For editions, commentaries, and translations a name and an ‘*ad loc*’ (explicit or implicit) are usually enough (where such references also carry a date, it is preceded by an asterisk —and the work should be sought in sections (i) and (ii) of the Bibliography). In references to ancient authors titles are abbreviated in a fashion which I hope is standard—or at least readily intelligible. When only a single work by an author survives, I generally dispense with a title.

³ A sample of texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 14-26; see, recently, Ierodiakonou [1993]; Dörrie and Baltes [*1996], pp.205-231. – The origins of the tripartition were disputed in antiquity; but the thing became a commonplace: *philosophiae tres partes esse dixerunt et maximi et plurimi auctores* (Seneca, *ep* lxxxix 9—the chief exceptions were the Peripatetics [see below, p.20]).

holm-oak.⁴ Fronto's fears were not idle, and he lost his pupil to philosophy; but neither perhaps were his urgings altogether in vain—Marcus kissed goodbye to logic.⁵

And in this respect at least—or so it is often supposed—Marcus was representative of his epoch. By the early imperial period, Stoic philosophy had contracted into ethics: physics and logic were forgotten or ignored. Philosophy, after all, was the science of how to live, the *ars vitae*;⁶ and a philosopher was expected to spoon out practical advice. Half a century or more before Marcus' reign, Dio Chrysostom, the celebrated orator and bellettrist, once found himself taken for a philosopher.⁷ The reasons were wholly external: destitute and in exile, he looked and behaved like a tramp. Convinced that sartorial neglect was a sign of spiritual elevation,⁸

many people came up and asked me what seemed to me good or bad, and I was obliged to reflect on these matters in order to be able to answer their questions. Then they urged me to stand up in public and speak; and so it became necessary for me to speak about what is appropriate for men and what seemed to me likely to benefit them. (*orat* xiii 12)

That is to say, if people took you for a philosopher, they took you for a moral guru.⁹

If philosophers were taken for gurus, that was because philosophy was taken for ethics. Moreover, the ethics for which it was taken was not a particularly theoretical thing: it preferred protreptic to argument, it preferred exhortation to analysis—it was a high-brow moralizing. So, above all, in the Stoa: in the *Meditations* of Marcus, in the *Discourses* of Epictetus, in the letters and essays of Seneca. Three Stoics of very different background and status and character; three bodies of writing very different in style and in nature and in purpose; and in all three a common

⁴ *eloq* v 4-5 [p.152 van den Hout²]; on Dionysius see also *ad Caes* II i 3 [p.17 van den Hout²].

⁵ But in Book I of the *Meditations*, his record of spiritual debts, Marcus' brief sentence on Fronto (I xi), makes no mention of any intellectual matter at all.

⁶ E.g. Sextus, *M* XI 200; Plutarch, *quaest conviv* 613B; Clement, *paed* II xxv 3; further references and discussion in Lakmann [1995], p.26. – The main thesis of Hadot [1995] has it that philosophy, in the ancient world, was always 'above all a way of life' (p.19): true, I suspect, only if the phrase 'way of life' is construed in the most generous (or vacuous) fashion possible.

⁷ Dio had studied philosophy under Musonius Rufus (Fronto, *eloq* i 4 [p.135 van den Hout²]) —whom he later attacked (Synesius, *Dio* 37). The story of his subsequent 'conversion' to philosophy is a fable (see Moles [1978]); and his intellectual place is in the literary and rhetorical camp, not among the philosophers. A convenient summary in Desideri [1994].

⁸ A common enough conviction, to judge from Epictetus, *diss* IV viii 5-8.

⁹ Nothing new about that: see, for an early example, Empedocles, B 112.8-12 Diels-Kranz.

determination to moralize—a century and more of preaching, which different tastes will judge inspiring or dispiriting, profound or pretentious. Such a view of imperial philosophy, and in particular of imperial Stoicism is, I take it, a commonplace. Ancient historians debate the philosophical opposition to the bad emperors and discuss the philosophical companions of the good. They generally and tacitly suppose that philosophy was more or less equivalent to ethics. After all, if it is philosophical ideas which encourage you to oppose a régime or a ruler, surely those ideas will derive from ethical or political philosophy? And if a philosopher is to sustain a statesman with useful admonition and salutary advice, then, once more, it is the ethical part of philosophy which will count. To be sure, it does not follow that a philosopher who loathed or loved an emperor had little time for logic himself; but it would not be surprising if logic was at best one of his background interests.

As for historians of logic, they do not dwell long on the names of Seneca and Epictetus and Marcus. A few texts of these authors are cited in the more comprehensive handbooks¹⁰—and any treatment of Stoic logic must quote the celebrated passage of Epictetus on the Master Argument of Diodorus Cronus.¹¹ But such texts appear in the guise of ‘fragments’; that is to say, they are adduced not to celebrate the logical opinions of their authors but to plump out a history of earlier Stoic logic.

Indeed, Stoic logic is often presented precisely as the logic of Chrysippus—or at any rate, as the logic of the Hellenistic Stoa. And for two diverse and excellent reasons. First, it is undeniable that Chrysippus was the greatest of the Stoic logicians; that he not only determined the programme for Stoic logic but also carried out a major part of it himself. In antiquity he was the Stoic logician *par excellence*—it was Chrysippus’ logic which the gods would use had they any need for logic.¹² The surviving catalogue of Chrysippus’ logical works gives us some rough idea of the scope and detail of his logical interests;¹³ and the surviving *testimonia* to Stoic logic show very little which cannot be accommodated within those interests. Stoic logic was not identical with Chrysippean logic; but Chrysippus surely stood to Stoic logic as Aristotle stood to Peripatetic syllogistic.

Secondly, the state of our sources does not allow us to say much about any development which Stoic logic may have undergone. There are, it is true, a few texts which explicitly ascribe arguments or theses to later logicians; and of the numerous texts which speak generally of ‘the Stoics’,

¹⁰ Thus Hülser [*1987] cites one text from Marcus, 18 from Seneca, 25 from Epictetus (by way of comparison: about 100 from Cicero).

¹¹ See below, pp.76–77.

¹² Diogenes Laertius, VII 180; cf e.g. Cicero, *orat* xxxii 115; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *comp verb* 31; Clement, *strom* VII xvi 101; see e.g. Frede [1974a], pp.26–29.

¹³ Diogenes Laertius, VII 189–202; see Barnes [1996].

some at least may plausibly be imagined to refer to the state of the art after the death of Chrysippus. But we are not yet in a position to write an interesting history of Stoic logic; and a chronicler of the subject will reasonably prefer a systematic to an historical account—and will reasonably pretend that the system belongs, for the most part, to Chrysippus himself.

I have no quarrel with those ancient historians who ignore physics and logic when it comes to the machinations of empire; nor shall I insinuate that it was reflection on the Master Argument which ultimately led Thræsea Paetus to court an honourable death, or that Seneca whispered syllogisms into Nero's young ears. But it is one thing to allow an historian of political life to concentrate his gaze upon the ethical part of philosophy: it is another thing to concede that the ethical part was the only part which was of any account in the social and intellectual dramas of the time.

I have no quarrel with those expositors of Stoic logic who think primarily—or even solely—of the Old Stoa; nor shall I suggest that Seneca regenerated the study of hypothetical arguments or that Epictetus produced a novel theory of logical analysis. But it is one thing to allow that the best exposition we can now give of Stoic logic is an account of the logic of Chrysippus, and to agree that Chrysippus was responsible for by far the greater part of the subject: it is another thing to concede that after the second century B.C. the subject was abandoned, or neglected, or regarded as a fossil.

'It is one thing—it is another thing': the historian of the Empire and the historian of logic will no doubt accept the distinctions on the theoretical plane. Why should they accept anything more? Does 'another thing' mark more than an unreal possibility?

Well, perhaps the empire knew a few Stoic logicians? Sergius Plautus, whom Quintilian singled out as the best Latin author who had written on Stoicism, certainly touched on logical matters insofar as he interested himself in terminology.¹⁴ Athenodorus of Tarsus, who tutored the young Augustus (and who is thus an honorary member of the Empire), wrote something on Aristotle's *Categories*.¹⁵ The Egyptian Chaeremon, who tutored the emperor Nero, wrote something on conjunctions—and

¹⁴ The Stoic Plautus of Quintilian X i 124 is surely the same as the Plautus of II xiv 2 (and of III vi 23), and hence is the linguistic innovator referred to at VIII iii 33—where Detlefsen's '*Sergio Plauto*' is therefore the right reading ('*Sergio Flavo*' codd). And Quintilian's Plautus is surely the Sergius who, according to Apuleius, *int* i, 190.4-5 Moreschini, used the word '*effatum*' for propositions or *orationes pronuntiabiles*. Sergius Plautus is generally dated to the first century A.D.; but in truth all our evidence is consistent with a date in the first century B.C.

¹⁵ Entitled '*Πρὸς τὰς Ἀριστοτέλους κατηγορίας*' (Simplicius, *in Cat* 62.25); see Goulet [1989d].

syntactical matters are close to logical matters.¹⁶ Lucius Annaeus Cornutus, friend of the poets Lucan and Persius and author of a tedious little book on Stoic theology, also wrote—like Chaeremon—on grammar; and in addition—like Athenodorus—he produced a work on Aristotle's *Categories*.¹⁷ Perhaps a few other names might be promoted.¹⁸ After all, the early imperial period was thick with philosophers, and in particular with Stoic philosophers. We know a little about some of these Stoics—about Attalus and Euphrates and Hierocles and Apollonius of Chalcedon and Cleomedes. But most of them are no more than names. And there were undoubtedly many others who are no longer even shadows of names. It is perfectly possible that one or another of these lost Stoics had a passion for logic.¹⁹

¹⁶ See Apollonius Dyscolus, *conj* 248.1-13. On Chaeremon see Frede [1989]; Goulet [1994b].

¹⁷ See e.g. Porphyry, in *Cat* 86.23-24; Simplicius, in *Cat* 62.28 (Cornutus wrote *πρὸς Ἀθηνόδωρον καὶ Ἀριστοτέλην*). – Note also POxy 3694: a work *Περὶ ἔκτων*, of which only the title survives. On Cornutus see Most [1989]; Gonzalez [1994].

¹⁸ Aristocles of Lampsacus (below, p.73), Herophilus (below, p.73 n.199)?

¹⁹ Apart from Arrian, and the Stoic poets (Lucan and Persius and Silius Italicus), and the Stoic 'opposition'—Thræsea Paetus, Rubellius Plautus, Barea Soranus [see below, p.41], Q.Paconius Agrippinus, Iunius Rusticus, Helvidius Priscus, Herennius Senecio, Q.Iunius Arulenus Rusticus, Iunius Mauricus, Plautius Lateranus [?—see Epictetus, *diss* I i 19]—for none of whom is it plausible to imagine logical investigations, there might be mentioned: Seneca's fellow-student Claranus (*ep* lxvi 1); Iulius Canus, *vir in primis magnus* (*tranq* xiv 1-10); Metronax (*ep* lxxvi 4); Serapio (*ep* xl 2); Chaeremon's pupil Dionysius (Suda, s.v. Διονύσιος Ἀλεξανδρεὺς); Cornutus' pupils Claudius Agathinus [?] and Petronius Aristocrates (*vit Pers* 5); Plutarch's friends, the poet Sarapion (*def orac* 402F, with SEG XVIII 225) and Themistocles (*quaest conviv* 626E) and Philip (*quaest conviv* 710B); Musonius' pupils, Dio and Timocrates and Athenodotus (Fronto, *eloq* I iv [p.135 van den Hout²]), and Artemidorus (Pliny, *ep* III xi 5), and Pollio (Suda, s.v. Πωλλίων), and Lucius, who made his master's discourses public (Stobaeus, *ecl* II xv 46); Timocrates' pupil Lesbonax (Lucian, *saltat* 69 [305]); Decianus the friend of Martial (I 8), and Fronto (XIV 106); Coeranus (Tacitus, *ann* XIV lix 2) and P.Egnatius Celer (Tacitus, *hist* IV 10, 40); various teachers of Marcus Aurelius—Cinna Catulus, Claudius Maximus, Sextus of Chaeronea (*HA: vMarci* iii 1-2), perhaps Diognetus and Bacchius and Tandarid and Marcianus (I vi—no reason to identify this Bacchius with the Platonist recorded in SIG³ 868B), and also Basilides (Jerome, *chron* ad Olymp 232); Philopator (Galen, *an mor* V 41 Kühn; Nemesius, *nat hom* xxxv [p.291 Matthaei]); Nestor ([Lucian], *macrob* 21 [223]); Antibios and Eubios of Ascalon (Stephanus of Byzantium, s.v. Ἀσκάλων); Heliodoros (scholiast to Juvenal, I 33); Theo of Alexandria (Suda, s.v. Θεὸν Ἀλεξανδρεὺς); Annius, Athenaeus, Herminius, Lysimachus, Medius, Musonius, Phoebio, Themistocles (Longinus, *apud* Porphyry, *vit Plot* 20); Trypho (Porphyry, *vit Plot* 17); Callietes (Porphyry, frag 408 Smith = Eusebius, *PE* X iii 1); the Christian Pantaeus (Eusebius, *HE* V x); and, from inscriptions, the Stoic διάδοχοι T.Coponius Maximus, Aurelius Heraclides Eupyrides, and Iulius Zosimianus (IG II² 3571, 3801, 10046a, 11551—on διάδοχοι see e.g. Smith [1996], pp.125-127); L.Petilius Propas (*Inscriften von Olympus* no. 453); Theoxenus (IG II² 10046a); T.Claudius Alexander and C.Tutilius Hostilianus (CIL VI 9784, 9785); Cn.Arterius Apollonius (SEG XVII 467); Meleager and Aelius Aelianus (*Bulletin épigraphique* 1958, no. 84); T.Aavianus Bassus Polyaeus (*Inscriften von Prusa ad Olympum*, no. 18). See e.g. Zeller [1909], III i, pp.606-608, 711-717; Tod [1957]; Pohlenz [1970], I pp.276-290; II pp.142-148; Hahn [1989], pp.122-131.

So indeed it is. But the historian will observe, and rightly, that for none of them is a passion for logic actually attested. And history (as a few historians continue to believe) is a matter not of interesting possibilities but of documented facts.

A side glance at the other philosophical schools is appropriate. For if the other schools had their logicians, they were not numerous and apparently they made little splash. The Peripatetics continued to discuss Aristotle's syllogistic.²⁰ Alexander of Aphrodisias, whose commentary on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* survives, had predecessors whose works are lost but who certainly did not neglect logical issues. Alexander himself was no logical ninny²¹—nor was he averse to controversy;²² moreover, he was a public figure who held an imperial chair at Athens and dedicated one of his works to his imperial patrons.²³ Nonetheless, it is clear that he was a philosopher's philosopher—and clear, too, that logic was not his chief concern.

As for the Platonists, the *Didaskalikos* of Alcinous contains a few pages on logic.²⁴ But they are desultory enough—and Alcinous spends more space on etymology than he does on any serious logical topic. There is also Apuleius—if indeed the surviving *de Interpretatione* is his.²⁵ But the work is no more than an elementary introduction. The Epicureans? They had never been enthusiastic logicians,²⁶ and there is no reason to think that the imperial Epicureans discovered a hidden interest in the subject: the vast inscription which Diogenes set up at Oenoanda in the 120s contained a section on physics and a section on ethics—nothing on logic.²⁷ The Pyrrhonian sceptics? They were few, and of little significance. And although Sextus Empiricus busied himself about logic,²⁸ he can hardly be said to have promoted the subject.

The eclectic Galen also demands mention. Marcus knew and admired him.²⁹ His was a prominent profile, and his works were widely read in his lifetime. And he was a gifted logician—the third logician of the ancient world after Aristotle and Chrysippus. Yet it may be doubted if he was read for his logic. Indeed, he himself complained, with frequency and acerbity,

²⁰ On later Peripatetic logic see Lee [1984]; cf e.g. Barnes [1986].

²¹ See e.g. Barnes *et al* [*1991]; Flannery [1995]. – On Alexander in general see Sharples [1987]; Goulet and Aouad [1989].

²² On the controversy with Galen see e.g. Rescher and Marmura [*1966]; Zimmermann [1976]; Nutton [*1979], p.189; Tieleman [1996].

²³ See *fat* 164.14–16.

²⁴ *didask* 5–6 [pp.156–160 Hermann]; see Dillon [*1993], pp.72–76; Göransson [1995], pp.114–118.

²⁵ On Apuleius and logic see especially Sullivan [1967]; cf Hijmans [1987].

²⁶ See below, pp.9–10.

²⁷ See Smith [*1993].

²⁸ See below, p.127.

²⁹ At least, Galen says that he did: 'first among physicians, unique among philosophers' (*praecogn* XIV 660 Kühn; cf Philoponus, *aet mund* 599.24–26).

that his contemporaries neither knew nor loved the subject: his fellow doctors would not touch it; his fellow philosophers had not bothered to study it; and as for the general public, to most of them logic seemed a thoroughly trivial business—you might as well spend your time drilling holes in millet-seeds.³⁰

If the imperial Stoics cared little for the logical part of philosophy, they were not idiosyncratic in their attitude. The age, it seems, was not in the logical vein.

Nor, of course, need this astonish. Philosophy, in general, has often enough been despised. Under the Empire there were outbreaks of hostility towards philosophers, in various quarters and at various times;³¹ and no doubt many Romans were content to recite the verse of Ennius: 'It's enough if a few do philosophy—in general, it's not very pleasing [*philosophandum est paucis; nam omnino haud placet*]'.³² As for logic in particular, it has rarely been a popular pastime; and those few laymen who like it treat it rather as a *divertissement* than as an object of weight and moment.

Even philosophers have been known to disown the subject. The branch of charlatanry which the English gallantly call 'continental philosophy' knows nothing of it; and that most English of philosophers, John Locke, saw no profit in syllogistic—any washerwoman could reason as competently as Aristotle. In the ancient world such attitudes were not unknown. The Cynics—so we are told—rejected logic. The Cyrenaics rejected logic. The Epicureans rejected logic.³³ Even some Stoics rejected logic: Aristo of Chios, Zeno's wayward pupil, allegedly had no truck with the subject;³⁴ and Zeno himself—our evidence is meagre—once said something uncomplimentary about it.³⁵ Logic was not always loved in antiquity: Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus were, it seems, heirs to a tradition.

³⁰ See *praecogn* XIV 605 Kühn. – On Galen as a logician see Barnes [1991]; [1993a]; [1993b]; Hülser [1992].

³¹ For expulsions of philosophers see Epictetus, *diss* IV viii; Athenaeus, 609D-612F; Tacitus, *ann* XV 71 (Nero); Pliny, *ep* III xi 1-3, with Sherwin-White, *ad loc*; Dio Cassius, LXVI xiii 1-2 (Vespasian); Dio Cassius, LXVII xiii 1-3 (Domitian). – In general see e.g. Friedländer [1920], III, pp.249-266; Brunt [1994], pp.39-40.

³² frag 28 Jocelyn (from the *Andromacha*): cited by Gellius, V v 9, thrice alluded to by Cicero — a *locus classicus* (Tacitus, *Agricola* iv 3). – Compare Epictetus, *diss* I xxii 18: 'an old man, his hair grey and his fingers dripping with gold rings, will come along and say: 'My boy, of course you need a bit of philosophy—but you need a brain too [δεῖ μὲν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν, δεῖ δὲ καὶ ἐγκέφαλον ἔχειν]''.

³³ See e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VI 103 (Cynics); Seneca, *ep* lxxxix 11 (*Epicurei ... rationalem [= λογικὴν] removerunt*); § 12 (*Cyrenaiici naturalia cum rationalibus sustulerunt*).

³⁴ See e.g. Seneca, *ep* lxxxix 13; Sextus, *M* VII 12; Diogenes Laertius, VII 160 (cf Ioppolo [1980], pp.63-69). – Note that Marcus had read Aristo, and liked him: Fronto, *ad Caes* IV xiii 2-3 [pp.67-68 van den Hout²].

³⁵ 'Zeno compared the arts of the logicians to correct measures which measure not grain or anything useful but chaff and dung' (Stobaeus, *ecI* II ii 12). See below, pp.67-68.

A little more precision is desirable. For crude sentences of the form ‘x rejects logic’ are unsatisfying, on two counts.

First, ‘rejection’ took more forms than one. You might *dismiss* logic—as a pseudo-subject (like astrology), or as a subject incapable of scientific study (like rhetoric), or as a subject unworthy of serious attention (like athletics). Or you might rather *disparage* logic—as a subject of little importance, or as at best a distraction from matters of substance.³⁶ Different attitudes—but with the same consequence: a rational man will not devote his time to logic.

In principle, you might ‘reject logic’ in a different sense: you might abjure rational argument altogether. And I should perhaps therefore insist—something which is banal in the extreme but which has been missed by some commentators—that it is one thing to decline to study the subject of logic, and quite another to decline to produce arguments. No ancient philosopher is accused of abjuring reason; and even if the Epicureans, say, in some fashion ‘rejected logic’, that did not stop them from producing arguments for their doctrines, like any other decent group of philosophers. As Locke waggishly put it: ‘God has not been so sparing to Men as to make them barely two-legged creatures, and left it to *Aristotle* to make them Rational’. You may—it is a brutal fact—argue, and argue well, without ever having opened a text-book on logic.

Secondly, and more importantly, the word ‘logic’ requires a gloss. Hitherto I have chucked the term around: henceforth I shall use it in what I take to be its standard modern sense. This sense is doubtless vague. But anyone who has a smattering of English has a firm enough hold on the word’s meaning.

Historians of philosophy often use the word ‘logic’ to name one of the three parts into which the ancients customarily divided philosophy. Here the word takes leave of its modern sense and simply serves as a transliteration of the Greek word ‘λογική’. It thus picks out, quite generally, the study of whatever falls within the province of reason or λόγος. ‘Logic’, in this sense, was customarily divided by the Stoics into rhetoric and ‘dialectic’.³⁷ Rhetoric has, thank God, little to do with what a modern logician thinks of as his patch;³⁸ and, if only for this reason, λογική is not to be identified with logic. ‘Dialectic’ brings us closer to logic. But ‘διαλεκτική’ is a broader term than the modern ‘logic’. For dialectic itself was standardly split into two parts, one of which studied ‘signifiers’ and the other ‘things

³⁶ And an ancient report that ‘X rejects Y’ may sometimes, I suspect, merely reflect the fact that X apparently devoted no attention to Y.

³⁷ For the several ‘divisions’ of λογική see Hülser [*1987], pp.LXXVII-XC.

³⁸ But ancient theorists, from Aristotle onward, usually found the need to discuss various logical matters in their treatises on rhetoric.

signified', and the former part included, for example, the study of sound and voice—psychological and physio-logical matters which, by our lights, are no concern of a logician. As for the study of 'things signified', that included (at least, in some versions of the division) the study of impressions or φαντασίαι—that is to say, it occupied itself with many of the issues which we should now incline to classify under the rubric of epistemology.

But in addition, and perhaps primarily, the study of 'things signified' treated what the Stoics called λεκτά or 'sayables'; and among sayables are 'assertibles' or ἀξιώματα. A sayable is what we can say by uttering some linguistic expression; and an assertible is what we can assert by uttering a special sort of linguistic expression. Thus by uttering the expression 'Chrysippus was a Stoic logician' I may—if all the circumstances are right—assert something, namely that Chrysippus was a Stoic logician. And that Chrysippus was a Stoic logician is an assertible.³⁹ Now assertibles are quintessentially logical items—they are the primary bearers of truth and falsehood, and the immediate components of normal arguments. It is thus in the study of Stoic sayables, and in particular in the study of assertibles, that we find most of what we now think of as pertaining to logic.

When an ancient philosopher—or an ancient layman—is said to have rejected 'logic' what exactly is he supposed to have been rejecting? Our sources provide no uniform answer to this question. Frequently enough, they suggest that what is being rejected is λογική, the part of philosophy. Thus the Cynics 'determine to abolish the logical and the physical area, like Aristo of Chios, and to attend to the ethical area alone' (Diogenes Laertius, VI 103). As for Aristo, 'he does away with the physical and the logical area, saying that the one is beyond us and the other nothing to us' (Diogenes Laertius, VII 160). And among the Cyrenaics, 'Meleager ... and Clitomachus ... say that they think that the physical and the dialectical parts are useless' (Diogenes Laertius, II 92). But it is hard to think that any philosopher could have been prepared to abandon everything which traditionally sheltered under the generous umbrella of λογική; and it is not implausible to discount the reports as jejune summaries or polemical exaggerations.

In some cases, at least, it is positively plausible. Thus Sextus remarks that 'some say that Epicurus rejects logical theory' (*M* VII 15); but he immediately adds that others denied this. Seneca observes that the Epicureans found that they could not do without certain parts of λογική, which they treated as an annexe to physics; and both Seneca and Cicero

³⁹ See further below, pp.99-102.

give compact accounts of those aspects of λογική which the Epicureans did in fact cultivate.⁴⁰ A similar story may be told of the Cyrenaics.⁴¹

Sometimes our sources suggest more specifically that the rejected object was dialectic; but even dialectic includes a number of items which no philosopher is likely to dismiss—and which the Epicureans certainly did not dismiss. Should we conclude that, often at least, what the ancient opponents of logic were rejecting was precisely logic, that it is what we mean by ‘logic’ which was being ousted from the philosophical nest? Even this conclusion is, in general, too strong. For again, some Epicureans certainly took some interest in some parts of logic.

Then what was rejected? Many of the ancient enemies of ‘logic’ evidently had a particular loathing for the logical puzzles and conundrums which were a celebrated—or notorious—part of ancient logical studies; and in some cases at least I suspect that a ‘rejection of logic’ amounts to no more than an unwillingness to discuss the enigmas of the Liar or to shovel away at the heap of the Sorites. If such was your attitude, then you could reject logic while retaining an interest in the greater part of the subject—you could ‘reject logic’ without rejecting logic.

In short, the ‘tradition’ in which Marcus and Epictetus and Seneca have seemed to stand is a wraithlike thing. Many philosophers had certainly dismissed from their thoughts certain subjects which belong to what we think of as logic; many philosophers had no doubt disparaged some parts at least of the subject. But it may be doubted whether logic as a whole was often rejected; and if the imperial Stoics did indeed abandon the whole thing, they were doing more than sauntering along a trite and traditional path.

However that may be, a common view has it that ethics exhausted or engrossed the philosophy of the imperial Stoics. The view is part of a broader panorama, which may be vaguely described as follows. In the heyday of Aristotle, ethics formed an important part of philosophy; but it was not a dominant part of the subject, and the *Nicomachean Ethics* is no more vital an ingredient in Aristotle’s system of thought than is, say, the *Physics* or the *Analytics*—or, come to that, the *Generation of Animals*. After Aristotle’s death, things changed; and in the Hellenistic schools—in the Garden of Epicurus and under the Porch of the Stoics—ethics became the end-all of philosophical reflection. Physics and logic were studied, to be sure; but they were subordinated to morals, they were treated only insofar

⁴⁰ Seneca, *ep* lxxxix 11; Cicero, *fin* I xix 63; cf I vii 22; Diogenes Laertius, X 30. – The subtlety and detail with which some Epicureans treated the subject is shown by Philodemus’ *On Signs*, on which see de Lacy [*1978]; Barnes [1988].

⁴¹ See e.g. Seneca, *ep* lxxxix 12; Sextus, *M* VII 11.

⁴² See below, pp. 14–15; 76–77.

as they might serve an ethical end, and the aim and purpose of philosophy was to show a man how best to lead his life. (The idea was not offered as a novelty: on the contrary, it was purportedly a return to the true philosophy of Socrates.)

Then, as the millennium turned (not that the poor pagans knew it), ethics became not merely an end-all but a be-all, not merely the heart or centre of philosophical endeavour but its sum and body. To be sure, it was not universally so: Platonists, for example, sustained an apparently independent interest in metaphysics; academic Peripatetics kept some of Aristotle's unethical ideas alive; amateur philosophers, like Plutarch or Galen, cultivated an interest, whether antiquarian or progressive, in various aspects of physics and of logic. But by and large—and above all in the dominant Stoic school — ethics was emperor, and sole emperor.

Panoramas may delight: metaphorical panoramas bewitch more often than they instruct. And the particular panorama which I have just described is, I think, almost wholly lacking in verisimilitude—to the extent that such a vague picture can be compared with reality at all. But that is not my concern: only part of the picture here interests me—the part which portrays ethics as engrossing or exhausting the philosophy of the imperial Stoics. The picture shows logic dismissed or disparaged; it intimates that the imperial Stoics forwent the ins and outs of those delicious operations in which Chrysippus had spent the better part of his philosophical energies.

I do not say that this picture is mere fantasy. On the contrary, it is based on evidence which seems sturdy enough; and it is intrinsically plausible. But I think that it is demonstrably false.

I shall say no more about Marcus, who is a hopeless case.⁴³ The next Chapter will scan, fairly rapidly, a few passages in Seneca. Chapter 3 will turn to Epictetus.

⁴³ I do not know what to make of VIII xiii ('always and in the case of every impression—if you can—φυσιολογεῖν, παθολογεῖν, διαλεκτεύεσθαι'); but here Marcus certainly appears to encourage some sort of logical activity. Note also III xi 1 ('always make a definition or characterization [ὅρον ἢ ὑπογράφη] of whatever impression strikes you'). For physics one might also cite e.g. VIII lii; X ix 13; xxxi 5. (And see below, p.34 n.47.)

CHAPTER TWO

SENECA

At first blush, the case of Seneca seems straightforward. To be sure, he had himself studied some logic—no-one could study philosophy without studying some logic. But he did not write anything expressly on the subject, and most of his interminable pages make no reference at all to logical matters. Moreover—or so at first it seems—in those few passages where he does refer to logic his attitude is uncompromisingly hostile.¹

A few samples. In *ep* xlv he prosecutes his ‘case against the logicians [*lis cum dialecticis*]’ (§ 13). These men ignore what is necessary [*necessaria*], and confine themselves to what is otiose [*supervacua*]: their study is mere ‘quibbling and sophistical argumentation [*cavillatio et captiosae disputationes*]’ (§ 5). Seneca is speaking of logicians in general—not merely of his own degenerate contemporaries or of silly school disputations. Indeed, he specifically alludes to the great men, the *magni viri*, and their books; and it is surely Chrysippus and his followers who are meant. Admittedly, he is prepared to allow, in *ep* xlv, that such superfluous triflings are, for the most part, harmless; but he finds it difficult to see how they might provide even a modest portion of pleasure (§ 4).

Elsewhere he is less tolerant. Lucilius, to whom the letters are formally addressed, is chided for wasting his time on childish futilities, *pueriles ineptiae*. Philosophy is supposed to deal with the grand questions, to reconcile us to the misery of life and the emptiness of death, to console us and sustain us and strengthen us. The trivialities of logic contribute nothing to these ends: they serve no philosophical purpose at all; and what is worse, they distract us from serious pursuits (*ep* xlviii 6-7). Or again: life is too short for logic (*ep* xlix 5-6); the shadow of the morrow darkens us;

¹ ‘... although Seneca accepts the traditional division of philosophy into ethics, physics, and logic ..., his interest was by no means catholic, and the only division of which he even intended to give a complete account was the *pars moralis*. For the rhetoric and dialectic included in the *pars rationalis* he had nothing but contempt, and even the epistemology is simply accepted without argument’ (Griffin, [1992], p.175—the ‘complete account’ of ethics is the lost *liber de moribus*: fragments in the Teubner Seneca, III, pp.462-467). This judgement, by the most eminent scholar of Seneca’s philosophical ideas, will, I guess, find general acceptance. And this may explain why so little—as far as I know—has been written on Seneca and logic: I may mention Leeman [1953] and Trillitzsch [1962]; Gould [1965] and Hachmann [1995], pp.238-262, discuss the role of reason (*ratio*, λόγος) in Seneca’s thought, but not his attitude to logic.

philosophers must steer the leaking ship of humanity through the tempests of fear and pain; logic is mere trickery and cleverness, *subdola ... calliditas*; it is an impertinent and a dishonourable diversion (§ 12).

Elsewhere Lucilius is urged to abandon philosophical word-games, the *ludus literarius philosophorum* (*ep* lxxi 6—how little the insults have changed). He must forget logical fripperies, which have no power against the skeleton with the sickle (*ep* lxxxii 8): ‘in my judgement, that whole class of things should be rooted out’ (§ 19). Or again, let him stop playing games, let him flee logical disputations (*cii* 20), let him abandon his melancholy futilities, his *tristes ineptiae* (*cxiii* 26).²

The condemnations are sharp, and they seem to be consistent. Logic is a worthless enterprise, offering nothing to the serious philosopher. Worse, logic is a dangerous enterprise—if only because it diverts attention from the deep problems of philosophy and the deep problems of life. All this is pretty rhetorical. But then it is the product of a rhetorical virtuoso; and if Seneca applies his paints with a generous trowel, that is not to say that his pictures are mere *exercises de style*.

Now whatever these texts may insinuate about Seneca’s own attitude to logic, they surely shout loud about the attitude of Lucilius. In particular, they show that Lucilius had a passionate interest in the subject. Just as Fronto later feared for Marcus, so Seneca fears for Lucilius. For you do not inveigh against a practice in which nobody engages; and you do not urge a man to forgo something unless he is already involved in it. Lucilius, then, was spending his time on logic.

Marcus was surely a special case, and Fronto’s letters to him are personal documents: hence the fact that the young Marcus was tempted by logic does not in itself suggest any general thesis about the state of Roman youth. It is different with Lucilius and Seneca; for although Lucilius too was, no doubt, a real enough individual, Seneca’s letters to him are not real letters—and despite the occasional personal touches (genuine or fictitious) Seneca is evidently concerned to address a public audience.³ That is to say, Seneca is offering public protreptic in the guise of personal advice, and sauce for Lucilius is sauce for the rest of us. Hence if Seneca ‘fears for Lucilius’, he fears for the state of Roman youth; and if he worries that ‘Lucilius is spending his time on logic’, he worries that young Romans are spending their time on logic. That is to say, Seneca detected—or else purported to detect—an unhealthy appetite for logic among his younger contemporaries. It would be imprudent to conclude that all young Romans

² See also e.g. *ep* cviii 12; cxvii 25, 30.

³ On Lucilius see Griffin [1992], pp.347-353, 416-419 (with 519); and, for a survey of positions, Mazzoli [1989], pp.1853-1855.

were in fact swapping syllogisms and gorging themselves on the lotus fruits of logic. But it seems to me reasonable to infer that the youth of Rome was in fact devoting a certain amount of time to the subject.

Seneca's implicit testimony thus refutes the view that logic held little attraction for the Romans of the early empire: on the contrary, logic—and not ethics—was, at any rate for some youthful Stoics, the fairest part of philosophy. Whether or not Seneca's apparent hostility to logic was the conventional attitude of the day, it went against the preferred practice of the bright young things.

Nonetheless, Seneca's own attitude seems clear; for surely the texts I have cited prove that he, at least, was a sworn enemy of logic? The matter is perhaps a little more intricate than at first it appears.

For it must be asked what exactly Seneca was attacking; and the texts which I have thus far cited do not suggest that he was attacking logic itself. Rather, they seem to indicate a different and a far more specific target: the study of logical puzzles.⁴ It is the sophisms and the conundrums, the σοφίσματα and the ἄπορα—items on which the old Stoics had lavished or squandered so much time—which were seducing Lucilius and attracting Seneca's puritanical displeasure. Thus in *ep* xlv he refers specifically to the Horned Man and to the Liar (§§ 8, 10); in *ep* xlviii he refers to a silly paradox which confounds mice with 'mice', the rodents with the noun (*mus syllaba est* ...: § 6); in *ep* xlix the Horned Man returns (§ 8).⁵ Most telling is *ep* cxi. Seneca explains that there is no decent Latin word for the Greek 'σόφισμα' (Cicero's '*cavillatio*' is the least bad);⁶ for the Romans have no use for the thing and hence no need for the name (§ 1). They have no use for the thing because it is of no practical advantage, *ad vitam nihil proficit* (§ 2). At best the study of sophisms is a game (§ 4). Thus

I would not forbid you to have dealings with them—but only when you want to do nothing at all. Yet they do have one very bad effect: they create a sort of delight in themselves, and they capture and detain the mind which is charmed by an appearance of subtlety. (§ 5)⁷

Seneca, then—so it might be suggested—, is not urging us to abstain from logic *tout court*: he is urging us to abjure a petty interest in piffling puzzles. And his attitude—so it might be added—is not wholly absurd. For

⁴ See above, p.10.

⁵ For these puzzles see below, p.76.

⁶ The word occurs e.g. in Plautus in the sense of 'badinage': Seneca presumably implies that Cicero was the first to use it in a logical sense. In fact it is not found in any of Cicero's surviving works.

⁷ See below, p.36.

although the study of logical conundrums is in itself far from trivial, not all the ancient puzzles are equally serious; nor, when they are serious, is it immediately evident why they are serious—or even that they are serious. Discussion of the Liar is easily mistaken for idle chatter; and it will readily degenerate into infantile word-play. Moreover, it will be allowed that an accurate study of the Horned Man has rarely eased the agonies of death.

Now the suggestion that Seneca is out to scotch the study of logical puzzles is attractive; and it does, I think, fit the texts which I have thus far adduced; but it seems to founder on three further passages from the letters to Lucilius. I have in mind *ep* lxxxii 8-9 and lxxxiii 9-11, where Seneca deals with the celebrated syllogisms of Zeno,⁸ and *ep* lxxxv, which discusses similar Stoic arguments. An example:

No evil is glorious.

Death is glorious.

Therefore: death is not an evil.

Another:

Whatever is evil harms.

Whatever harms makes worse.

Pain and poverty do not make worse.

Therefore: pain and poverty are not evil.

These and similar syllogisms, put out by the founder of the Stoa, were roundly criticized by his contemporaries and stubbornly defended by his followers: Alexinus wrote refutations of them; Aristo of Chios (the Stoic who 'rejected logic'⁹) attacked Alexinus and defended Zeno's inferences; Diogenes of Babylon refurbished the old arguments; later on, Posidonius discussed some of them in considerable detail; they are alluded to in Cicero's *de natura deorum*, where they embarrass the Stoic Balbus. In short, the Stoics held the things near their hearts; and they were evidently still in vogue in Seneca's time.¹⁰

Cicero, no Stoic, derided the Zenonian syllogisms: these little arguments, *ratiunculae*,¹¹ which press us to the conclusion that pain is not

⁸ See also *ben* VII iv 7-8.

⁹ Above, p.9.

¹⁰ For references and discussion see Schofield [1983].

¹¹ See below, p.56 n.135.

an evil are futilities, *ineptiae*.¹² The Stoic Seneca echoes Cicero: the arguments are Greek *ineptiae*, tedious trifles; and Seneca confesses that such things never delight him. Now Zeno's syllogisms are not sophisms, nor are they conundrums. Yet Seneca refers to them in exactly the tone of exasperated disdain which he displays towards the Liar and the Horned Man. No doubt the logical puzzles were, to Seneca's way of seeing things, a prime example of logical twaddle. But his condemnation of logic did not limit itself to the puzzles: it stretched to the serious syllogisms of Zeno. Thus the attractive suggestion—that Seneca aims only at the puzzles—loses its appeal; for if not only the puzzles but also the syllogisms are dismissed—and dismissed in the same fashion and phraseology—, then it surely becomes plausible to suspect that Seneca's warnings do, after all, apply to logic as a whole.

Plausible—but no more; for at least three distinct reasons. First—and rather obviously—, in attacking Zeno's syllogisms Seneca is not attacking logic or any part of logic; for the syllogisms do not fall within the subject of dialectic at all. They were not presented by Zeno and they are not adduced by Seneca as items in or elements of the study of logic. Rather, they belong to moral philosophy, they are putative contributions to practical ethics. In objecting to them Seneca is not objecting to logical studies: he is objecting to a certain way of approaching certain questions in ethics.

Secondly—and equally evidently—, Seneca does not object to Zeno's syllogisms as pieces of logic: he does not criticize their form or structure from a logical point of view; nor—more pertinently—does he pretend or insinuate that the use of logic and the formal presentation of arguments is in general out of place in moral protreptic. His objection is quite other: he objects to the syllogisms because, in his view, they have no persuasive force.

'No evil is glorious. Death is glorious. Therefore death is not an evil'. —You've done it: I'm free of fear. After that, I shan't hesitate to stretch out my neck ...¹³ Good God, it is not easy to say who is the more futile: someone who thinks that with such an argument he extinguishes the fear of death, or someone who tries to refute the argument as though it had any bearing on reality. (*ep* lxxxii 9)

¹² *Tusc* II xii 29; cf. xii 42; *fin* IV iii 7; and, more generally, *fin* IV xviii 48-49. See also e.g. Lucian, *Jup trag* 51 [699]: 'If there are altars, there are gods. But there are altars. Therefore there are gods'. What do you think of that?—Let me finish laughing and I'll tell you'.

¹³ Philosophy *should* enable you to stick your neck out (in the literal sense): Epictetus, *diss* I i 18-19.

Armed with such feeble weapons you have no chance against death: 'I am ashamed to join the battle for gods and men armed with a gimlet [*subula armatum*]' (*ep* lxxxv 1).

Seneca's objection to the Zenonian syllogisms seems to be this: when the syllogisms are proposed and handled in a certain manner, they are psychologically ineffective. If, faced by Gerontius *in articulo mortis*, you glibly recite a few of Zeno's syllogisms, you will do him little good—certainly, you will not persuade him that death is not an evil. It takes the angel of the agony all his skill to do that—and the angel is no logician.

And Seneca's point, once again, seems eminently plausible: Zeno's syllogisms will no more *persuade* you that pain is not an evil or that death is not to be feared than Anselm's ontological argument will *persuade* you that God exists. Of course, it is another question whether Seneca's point is an objection against Zeno. Certainly, Anselm never intended or imagined that his argument would convert the heathen. And it may be guessed that Zeno was not naive enough to suppose that his syllogisms would convert the world to Stoicism and rationality.¹⁴ But then Seneca does not mean to object to Zeno (or at least, he says nothing explicitly about Zeno): he objects to those people—whoever they may be—who apparently imagine that Zenonian syllogisms will work psychological miracles.

The third of the three reasons is the most significant. It is based on *ep* lxxxvii 11-41. This long text deals, in some detail, with a sequence of syllogisms on the vanity of riches. In form and structure these arguments are indistinguishable from the syllogisms which were scorned in *ep* lxxxii and lxxxiii. In *ep* lxxxvii Seneca apparently sees nothing amiss with the things. At the end of the letter, to be sure, he turns to the question of the persuasive force of the arguments:

Let us suppose ourselves summoned to an assembly. A law for the abolition of wealth is proposed. Shall we persuade or dissuade by these arguments? Shall we bring it about that the Roman people demands and applauds poverty, the base and cause of its empire, and fears wealth? (§ 41)

Of course not: that is to say, the syllogisms are of no use in a political debate. But whoever thought that they were? And why ever think that if they are not politically effective, then they are of no value at all? It would be absurd to take such a view, and I see no indication in the text that Seneca was tempted by it. The syllogisms are introduced, neutrally enough, as 'a few arguments of our school which bear on virtue' (§ 11). Seneca discusses

¹⁴ Note Clement, *strom* II xx 125.1: 'Zeno well said of the Indians that he would rather see one Indian roasted than learn all the proofs about pain'.

them seriously and he defends them against subtle Peripatetic objections.¹⁵ And anyone who takes this view of the syllogisms of *ep* lxxxvii can hardly fail to take the same view of the similar syllogisms which Seneca discusses in the other letters.

But this third reason, far from illuminating the issue, may seem only to darken it; for does it not now appear that Seneca is not only hostile to Zenonian syllogisms, but inconsistently hostile—that he mocks some of them and patronises others? How is this inconsistency to be accounted for? Well, perhaps Seneca was simply inconsistent? (He would not have been the first philosopher of the breed.) Perhaps we should try to explain away the inconsistency in terms of an intellectual development? (Other philosophers have changed their minds. Perhaps Seneca started out with a distaste for logical argumentations, and later reconciled himself to them?)¹⁶ But I incline to a different resolution of the difficulty—I do not think that there is, at bottom, any inconsistency to explain or to explain away.¹⁷

Rather, Seneca's consistent attitude is something like this: in themselves, the Zenonian syllogisms are neutral. What matters is what you do with them. Most would-be philosophers who toy with them produce ineptitudes; and if the things are ponderously recited, or flashily paraded, they are mere frivolities—they cannot subserve the ethical ends which are their only *raison d'être*. But if they are taken in a different way—as concise expressions of philosophical insight, or as starting-points for discussion and illustration and development, or as texts on which to hang a protreptic sermon —, then they are serious things.¹⁸ And in Seneca's hands they will, no doubt, be turned to serious moral use, they will help the philanthropic philosopher in his philanthropic task.¹⁹

If I am right in this, the texts on Zeno's syllogisms do not scotch what I have called the attractive suggestion—the suggestion that Seneca's

¹⁵ Trillitzsch [1962], p.51, calls attention to 'the noteworthy fact that Seneca takes the Stoic inferences which he sets out at the start <in *ep* lxxxv> as subjects to be proved and defended, and not as proofs themselves'. A curious remark, and a false antithesis: in defending Zeno's syllogisms, Seneca is precisely claiming that they are proofs.

¹⁶ So e.g. Leeman [1953]: at first (see e.g. *ep* lxxxii) Seneca had a hearty dislike for all things logical; then he came to realize that his project for a major treatment of moral philosophy required a discussion of at least those parts of logic which the great Stoics had taken to be pertinent to ethics; and in the end he became more or less resigned to the study of what he had earlier regarded as Greek futilities.

¹⁷ I do not mean to deny that Seneca's attitude to logic may have changed in various ways—I have no opinion on the issue. I maintain only that no developmental hypothesis is needed in order to account for an apparent inconsistency in Seneca's thought.

¹⁸ Cf Cicero, *Tusc* III x 22; and—with a similar reference to apparently footling exercises in logic—Taurus, *apud* Gellius, VII xiii 7.

¹⁹ See e.g. *ben* V xii 3-7; *const sap* v 3-4; viii 1-2—texts in which comparable syllogisms are integrated into Seneca's general exposition. On Seneca's (admittedly infrequent) use of Stoic argument forms see Trillitzsch [1962], pp.46-59.

objections to logic modestly limit themselves to the study of sophisms and conundrums. Nonetheless, I do not think that the attractive suggestion is entirely correct—for it concedes too much to those who wish to make Seneca into an enemy of logic. In a certain sense these texts do not manifest any opposition to logic at all. It is not logic itself which arouses Seneca's scorn and his ire: it is what he calls *cavillatio*, logic-chopping. The import of his urgings is not: Don't do logic. It is: Don't quibble.

This interpretation is indirectly confirmed by *ep* cxiii 26. Here too we find *tristes ineptiae*. But the futilities against which Seneca here inveighs in his familiar fashion are not matters of logic. The question at issue is this: Is courage an animal? This, I suppose, is a matter of metaphysics—at any rate, it is not a matter of logic. Seneca spurns discussion of this metaphysical topic in exactly the terms in which he scorns logic-chopping. He spurns it because it is idle, futile, a waste of time and a distraction. In short, Seneca has a general animus against what he regards as intellectual futility: there are many exercises on which you may waste your mental energies; some of them, but not all of them, as a matter of fact fall within the sphere of logic. But that matter of fact is strictly irrelevant to Seneca's censure: his objection to logical puzzles and to a certain way with Zeno's syllogisms is not: It is logic—and therefore idle. It is rather, and simply: It is idle.²⁰

This conclusion, in itself unremarkable, is supported by a few items of positive evidence which show that Seneca was ready enough to accept logic when it was properly approached and properly used. Thus in *ep* lxxxix, where Seneca sets out to divide philosophy into its traditional parts, he remarks that some philosophers have rejected logic;²¹ but he does not think to praise these heterodox thinkers. He then offers a brief account of the content of the logical part of philosophy (§ 17). And he adds, speaking of λογική but thinking specifically of logic: 'I do not forbid you to read these things—provided that, whatever you read, you at once bring it to bear on ethics' (§ 18). Again, at *ep* cii 4 he observes that 'certain logical matters are themselves involved with ethics [*quaedam ... moralibus rationalia inmixta sunt*]'; and he affirms roundly that 'I have dealt with that part <of logic> which is correct and pertinent to ethics' (§ 5).

In sum, Seneca evinces a consequent attitude to logical study; and an attitude which need neither surprise nor disconcert. Logic is not in itself to be despised or dismissed: on the contrary, parts of it are useful—perhaps indispensable—even to the philosopher who is convinced that moral advice and moral consolation are the aims of his art. Trifling with logic—that is to

²⁰ Compare Seneca's views on the *artes liberales*: *ep* lxxxviii—note, e.g. the *supervacua* of Didymus (§ 37) or *Aristarchi ineptiae* (§ 39); cf *brev vit* viii 2 (*Graecorum morbus*); or his views on the solidly Stoic pastime of giving allegorical interpretations of myths (*ben* I iv: on which see Trillitzsch [1962], pp.109-110).

²¹ See above, pp.7-8.

say, indulging in logical studies which have no ethical purpose or ambition—is odious and dishonourable, a practice unworthy of a Stoic. But it is not odious because it is *logical* trifling: it is odious because it is logical *trifling*.

Seneca does not applaud the position which, according to some, was represented by the Cynics and the Cyrenaics and the Epicureans: he does not reject the logical part of philosophy, nor does he reject that part of the logical part of philosophy which we call logic. He applauds a different posture.

Some philosophers—Alexander of Aphrodisias and Galen the most eminent among them—maintained, against the general opinion, that logic was not itself a part of philosophy but rather its instrument; that is to say, they urged that logic should be studied insofar as it is useful and not as an object of intrinsic worth and interest; they advocated what might be called logical utilitarianism.²² Thus Alexander, taking his cue from the first sentence of Aristotle's *Analytics*, maintained that the aim of syllogistic is the production of ἀποδείξεις or scientific proofs, and that consequently a philosopher should study only those logical forms which are of use—of conceivable use—for the formalization of scientific arguments. Galen took the same line. The scientist needs logic in order to make certain discoveries and in order to organize and confirm what he has discovered, so that logic is an indispensable instrument of research and exposition. But beyond that, logic has no function; and abstract propositions or argument schemata which have no potential application to actual scientific practice are useless and otiose—they should find no place in logical studies.

I do not know who first elaborated the theory of logical utilitarianism, or who first derived it from Aristotle.²³ A number of texts, mostly late and interdependent, report a debate between those who maintained that logic was a part of philosophy (and therefore an object of study in its own right) and those who maintained that logic was an instrument or ὄργανον of philosophy (and therefore of purely utilitarian value).²⁴ To what extent the debate was an historical reality and to what an expositor's fiction is unclear. But the Peripatetics were placed in the utilitarian camp, and the Stoics were presented as their adversaries.

In general, this assessment of the Stoic attitude to logic is surely correct: at any rate, from Chrysippus onwards, Stoic logicians supposed, explicitly or implicitly, that numerous logical issues which have no discernible 'utility' were perfectly proper items of philosophical curiosity. They did

²² On which see Barnes [1993a].

²³ See Barnes *et al* [*1991], p.41 n.1.

²⁴ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 27-32a; see Lee [1984], pp.44-54; Barnes *et al* [*1991], pp.41-43.

not, of course, deny that logic offered important aid in ethics and in physics; but quite apart from that, it was a respectable object of philosophical attention in its own right. No doubt there were heterodox Stoics. Philodemus remarks that

dialectic is an art, and yet it does not effect anything in itself if it is not allied to ethical and physical arguments, as some of the Stoics maintained.
(*rhet* I, vi 10-18 = p.19 Longo Auricchio)

And we may recall those celebrated Stoic analogies: logic stands to the other parts of philosophy as the walls of an orchard shelter the fruit, as the shell of an egg contains the white and the yolk, as bones and sinews support and sustain an animal's body.²⁵ None of this strictly amounts to a logical utilitarianism; but it is easy to see how such ideas might lead to a utilitarian position.

Nevertheless, it is generally true that logical utilitarianism was perceived as an unStoic attitude. It is also a philistine attitude. Seneca, I think, was a logical utilitarian. In assuming the utilitarian attitude he shows himself an unorthodox Stoic,²⁶ and a philistine. But—unlike Marcus—he does not detest the lovely art.

It may seem that Seneca's utilitarianism was of a different stripe from the utilitarianism of Galen and Alexander: for them, logic served the needs of physics; for him, it served the needs of ethics. There is a generic identity and a specific diversity. But this contrast is misleading in one way, and perhaps in two.

First, if Seneca supposes that the study of logic should subserve a moral end, he does not thereby suppose that it should be the servant of the part of philosophy which is called ethics. Ethics is the study of the good, the bad, and the indifferent: logic, if I understand Seneca aright, has its value not insofar as it helps us to study the good but rather insofar as it helps us to become good. For Galen and Alexander, logic is an instrument to be used in physics or the study of nature. Seneca does not hold, with a pleasing symmetry, that logic is an instrument to be used in ethics or the study of conduct—he holds that it is an instrument to be used in conduct itself.

Secondly, something should be said about Seneca's attitude to physics. He had studied physics from his youth (*nat quaest* VI iv 2), and he took his studies seriously—witness the *Natural Questions* (which dates from the last

²⁵ See e.g. Sextus, *M* VII 17-19.

²⁶ Of course, no-one maintains that Seneca was an 'orthodox Stoic'—least of all Seneca himself (e.g. *ep* ii 5; viii 8; xii 11); see e.g. Rist [1989]—who does not refer to logic.

years of his life).²⁷ Several passages in this work seem at first blush to show that in physics, as in logic, he was a utilitarian. Take, say, VI xxxii 1:

it is better to become more powerful [*fortior*] than more learned; but the one does not come about without the other—for strength [*robur*] comes to the mind only from the good arts, from the contemplation of nature.

The text does not explicitly say that the sole reason for contemplating nature is to strengthen your moral fibre; but it readily suggests such an interpretation. Physics is worth doing because it promotes morality.²⁸

Other passages appear to tell in the opposite sense. Thus in the preface to the first book of *nat quaest* Seneca explicitly says that the part of philosophy ‘which pertains to the gods [*quae ad deos pertinet*]’ is far grander than the part which pertains to men—and it is clear from the context that the former part is physics and the latter ethics (I praef 1). Thus Seneca sets physics above ethics; and it might thence be inferred that the study of physics cannot possess a purely instrumental value. But the inference would be fallacious. Seneca certainly held that physics is a nobler study than ethics; and unremarkably—for the view, which in any case had the authority of Chrysippus behind it,²⁹ was little more than a platitude.³⁰ One study is nobler than another if it addresses a nobler object; and the object of physics is divine. The platitude does not entail that the study of physics is more important than correct ethical practice; nor, in particular, does it entail that the study of physics has an intrinsic value, a value which is not purely instrumental. In principle, at least, the grandeur of physics might lie precisely in its grand contribution to morality.

Yet it would be a mistake to ascribe a physical utilitarianism to Seneca, and his attitude to physics must be distinguished from his attitude to logic. True, he held that the point and purpose of physics is moral. But that is not to say that the study of physics has point and purpose only insofar as it leads to or facilitates moral practice. For the point of doing physics may be moral not insofar as it conduces to some further moral activity but rather insofar as it is itself a form of moral activity. And Seneca took physics to be moral in the latter way: he thought that the study of the natural world was in itself an essential part of the moral life.

The study of physics does not—or does not merely—help you to be good and happy: studying physics is a part of what it is to be good and happy; doing physics is itself a form of virtuous and felicitous activity—it is part of the repertoire of the Good Man, of the Sage. Indeed, Seneca’s

²⁷ On *nat quaest* see e.g. Codoñer [1989].

²⁸ Cf e.g. *nat quaest* II lix 2; *ep* xxxi 8; lxv 16-24; *ad Helv* viii 6.

²⁹ See e.g. Plutarch, *stoic repugn* 1035AB.

³⁰ See e.g. Aspasius, in *EN* 1.2-2.6.

enthusiasm for physics leads him to claim that virtue itself is splendid precisely because it ‘prepares the mind for the contemplation of heavenly things and makes it worthy to consort with god’ (*nat quaest* I praef 6).³¹ Logical study may enable you to lead a good life. Scientific study is a part, and the supreme part, of the good life. ‘O what a wretched thing is a man who does not raise himself above things human [*o quam contempta res est homo nisi supra humana surrexerit*]’ (§ 5).

This conclusion is no Senecan idiosyncrasy. On the contrary, it was a commonplace of ancient thought. It goes back to Plato and Aristotle. It may be ascribed, in one form or another, to many Hellenistic philosophers. It is expressed in numerous imperial texts. The commonplace depends, at bottom, on theology. For, first, ethics and physics are each given a theological turn: ethics, insofar as ‘assimilation to God’, ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, is conceived of as the ultimate end of human activity, or at least as an ideal to be striven towards; physics, insofar as the study of nature is properly speaking the study of ‘things divine’, of the universe and its parts and pieces. Now, secondly, it is plain that the gods find felicity in contemplation—that is to say, in physics. Hence we shall become god-like insofar as we study physics.

Logic remains an instrument—and, it may be added, an instrument for which the gods themselves have no use. It is an instrument by using which we may come to lead better lives; and insofar as leading a good life requires us to study physics, it is eminently plausible to suppose—what in any event must seem a banal enough truth—that logic is an instrument for physics. The difference between Seneca on the one hand and Alexander and Galen on the other is a matter of emphasis and of style rather than of substance.

³¹ Cf e.g. *nat quaest* I praef 11-17; III praef 18; *ep* lxxv 21; cx 9; cxvii 19; *ad Helv* xx 1-2.

CHAPTER THREE

EPICTETUS

§ A: Logic in the *Discourses*

Marcus thanked Rusticus ‘that I read the records [ὑπομνήματα] of Epictetus, of which Rusticus lent me his own copy’ (I vii 8). Marcus knew Epictetus thoroughly and borrowed generously from him for his *Meditations*.¹ And this is scarcely odd because Epictetus seems, at first glance—and again at second—, to be as devoted a moralizer as the emperor. The *Discourses*² contain just under a hundred *conversazioni*: not one of them turns on physics,³ and only a handful turn on logic.⁴

It is true that half of the *Discourses* is lost.⁵ But the *Encheiridion* is a sort of chrestomathy put together from the *Discourses*, and nothing in it suggests that in their general character the lost books were any different from those which have survived.⁶ Certainly, it would be bizarre to postulate that we have been deprived of a sustained Epictetan discussion of physics

¹ See Rutherford [1989], pp.225-255; cf Stanton [1968]. – Hadot [1978] argues that the whole structure of the *Meditations* is based upon the Epictetan theory of the three τόποι—see below, p.34-35.

² The English ‘*Discourses*’ is not altogether appropriate; but it is traditional, and innocuous. The ancient sources offer ‘Διατριβαί’ (Simplicius, Photius); ‘Διαλέξεις’ (Gellius—which he latins as ‘*Dissertationes*’); ‘ὑπομνήματα’ (Marcus; cf Arrian, *ad Gell* = Epictetus, *diss* praef 2).

³ But see frag I = Stobaeus, *ecl* II i 31 (below, pp.25-27); frag VIII = Stobaeus, *ecl* IV xlv 60.

⁴ All general works on Epictetus say something about his attitude to logic. The best pages I know are in Bonhöffer [1894], pp.122-127. In addition to the various items mentioned in later footnotes, see Long [1978], pp.119-121; and I should perhaps refer to de Lacy [1943]—which, despite its title, does not have much to say on logic; and Xenakis [1968]—which offers a thin survey spiced with a few howlers.

⁵ Photius knew eight books (*bibl* 58, 17b17-20 Bekker)—and he knew of twelve books of Ὀμιλία, also put together by Arrian (cf Schenkl [*1916], pp.XXXIII-XLVII—one fragment survives: frag XI = Stobaeus, *ecl* IV xxxiii 28); Gellius, XIX i 14-21, cites from the fifth book of the *Discourses* (= frag IX).

⁶ Arrian wrote *ench* ‘having collected from the remarks of Epictetus those items which are most pertinent and most indispensable in philosophy and most capable of moving the soul, as he himself wrote in the letter to Massalenus. ... The same items, in pretty well the same words, are reported in Arrian’s *Discourses of Epictetus*’ (Simplicius, in *ench* praef 5-11 Hadot). We may therefore take it that everything in *ench* which has no close parallel in the surviving *Discourses*—by my reckoning something between a third and a half of the work—had a close parallel in the lost books.

or of a set of discourses on the logical part of philosophy.⁷ It is true, too, that the *Discourses* do not rehearse the teaching which went on in Epictetus' school: they rehearse—they purport to rehearse⁸—his informal discussions and his impromptu expositions. But they also purport to give us a picture of what the man himself was like, of what constituted the soul of his philosophy.

And the *Discourses* show us, indisputably, a man who talked largely in the ethical part of philosophy. Moreover, his talk was for the most part practical rather than theoretical, and severely practical at that. He offered the world a pin-striped cynicism, Diogenes without the barrel;⁹ and if there is something obscurely admirable about his dogged idealism, it is difficult to avoid the thought that the attitudes which he recommended are both humanly impossible and morally disgusting.

However that may be, the *Discourses* do contain a substantial number of references—mostly in the form of asides or *obiter dicta*—to logical issues. Many of these references are—or at least appear to be—disparaging; some of them are—or at least appear to be—scathing. It is easy to conclude—and it is a conclusion often drawn—that Epictetus hated logic, that he did not work at it himself, and that he did not urge his pupils, formal or informal, to work at it. In short, Epictetus 'rejected logic'.

The same has seemed to be true of physics. A fragment, conserved by Stobaeus, appears decisive.

Why, he says [φησί], should I care whether existing things are compounded from atoms or from indivisibles or from fire and earth? Isn't it enough to learn the essence of good and bad and the measures of desires and disinclinations and also of impulses and aversions, to run our lives using these as rules—and to forget about those things which are beyond us? Perhaps they cannot be known by the human mind; and even if you were to suppose that it is perfectly possible to know them, what is the advantage of such knowledge? Shouldn't we say that those people worry themselves [πράγματα ἔχειν] to no purpose

⁷ But it is a shame that the parts of the *Discourses* from which *ench* 52 was drawn are lost: see below, pp.38-39.

⁸ The author of the *Discourses* is Arrian, not Epictetus (though I shall follow the harmless custom of referring to them as though they had been written by Epictetus himself). On the disputed question of the relationship between Arrian's written words and Epictetus' spoken discourses see e.g. Stadter [1980], pp.26-31; Radt [1990]; Hadot [*1996], pp.152-160. On Arrian, in the philosophical vein, see Brunt [1977]; Follet [1989b].

⁹ See esp III xxii, Περὶ κυνισμοῦ, with Billerbeck [*1978]; IV viii 30-33—for the pin-stripes see IV xi. – Here and hereafter all merely numerical references are to the *Discourses* unless the context indicates otherwise.

who insist that this is a necessary part of what a philosopher must say? (frag I = Stobaeus, *ecI* II i 31)¹⁰

Physics is beyond us.¹¹ Probably we cannot understand it. Even if we can, it is of no use to us. Let it go hang.

Epictetus' writings are not easy to interpret.¹² For the most part they are dialogues or quasi-dialogues, in which Epictetus quizzes an interlocutor (real or imaginary) or else talks to himself. It is not always evident whether it is the interlocutor or Epictetus who is speaking, or whether Epictetus is setting himself a question or answering one. Moreover, he frequently uses irony, and it is often difficult to be sure, at first reading, whether a passage is ironical or not. In short, it is easy enough to get the sense of a passage upside down.¹³

And so it is with fragment I, which continues as follows. (The end of the text in Stobaeus is corrupt; but the essential message is not in doubt.)

—Now you don't think that the Delphic advice 'Know Thyself' is superfluous?

—Certainly not, he says [φησί].

—Then what does it mean? If you urged a member of a chorus to know himself, wouldn't he obey the recommendation by concerning himself with his fellow singers and with being in tune with them?

—Yes [φησί].

—And a sailor or a soldier?

<—Similarly.>¹⁴

—Then do you think that men have been made to live as solitary animals or rather with a view to some sort of community?

<—With a view to some sort of community.>¹⁵

—And by what have they been so made?

—By nature.

—Then we need not bother ourselves [πολυπραγμονεῖν] about nature, what it is and how it governs the world and whether it exists or not?¹⁶

¹⁰ For the text of Epictetus I follow Schenkl [*1916]—any significant deviations are noted. I have constantly consulted: Schweighäuser [*1799]; Long [*1885]; Oldfather [*1925]; Souilhé and Jagu [*1975]; Laurenti [*1989]; and Carter/Hard [*1995].

¹¹ A view commonly associated with Socrates (e.g. Xenophon, *mem* I i 11; Sextus, *M* VII 8; Eusebius, *PE* XV lxii 10—but note e.g. Cicero, *Rep* I x 16); and therefore not implausibly ascribable to Epictetus. (Note also Aristo: Diogenes Laertius, VII 160, quoted above, p.9.)

¹² Quite apart from the fact that the text is sometimes gravely corrupt.

¹³ The best account of the style of the *Discourses* is still that of Hirzel [1895], II pp.247-250.

¹⁴ It seems likely that a brief reply has dropped from the text here.

¹⁵ This reply, too, is missing in the MSS: it was added by Heeren. (For 'κοινωνικός' see esp IV xi 1; cf e.g. I xxiii 1; II x 14.)

¹⁶ For the (curious) question whether nature exists or not see Sextus, *PH* I 98.

The sequence of questions belongs to Epictetus and not to his interlocutor. Hence the 'φησί' in the answers refers to the interlocutor. Hence—working backwards—the initial 'φησί' does not mean 'Epictetus says':¹⁷ it is the 'φησι' with which Epictetus frequently introduces an anonymous (and no doubt feigned) interlocutor.¹⁸

The final remark in the fragment thus certainly comes from Epictetus' own mouth. Equally certainly, it cannot be construed as a straightforward statement to the effect that physics is not for us—to present such a statement as an inference from the preceding concessions would be grotesque. (And, in style as well as in content, thoroughly unEpictetan.) If the remark is nevertheless printed as a statement, then it must be construed in a heavily ironical fashion, so that it imports exactly the opposite of what it says. Better, punctuate it with a question-mark and make it an ironically rhetorical question.¹⁹

A young man asks why, given that the moral life is the goal of philosophical study, he should care about the nature of the universe, why he should con physics as well as ethics. And Epictetus proceeds to show him why he should. The fragment proves the opposite of what it has been taken to prove. It proves that Epictetus took physics to be a necessary part of philosophical study, not that he took it to be of no account.²⁰ Like the Old Masters of the Stoa—and like Seneca—, Epictetus was a devotee of the physical part of philosophy. It remains true that the surviving books of the *Discourses* contain no sustained discussion of physics; and the references to physics, though numerous enough,²¹ are usually of a very general nature and almost invariably set in a moral context. But this fact is hardly astonishing, and it certainly implies no disdain for the subject on Epictetus' part.

There are, as I have said, dozens of allusions in the *Discourses* to matters which fall within the logical part of philosophy—and in particular within logic. Epictetus himself had been trained in the subject by Musonius Rufus, who once memorably castigated him for an error in his logical exercises.²² And he learned his logic thoroughly. One sign of this is the casual use of

¹⁷ Pace Long, Oldfather, Laurenti, Carter/Hard.

¹⁸ See e.g. I iii 9; iv 1; vi 6. So too 'inquit' or 'inquis' in Seneca. The ancient theorists recognized the phenomenon, which they included under the head of 'personification' or προσωποποιία: e.g. Quintilian, IX ii 37; Fronto, *eloq* ii 14 [pp.141-142 van den Hout²], ascribing the practice to Chrysippus—whose rhetorical and stylistic panache he strangely praises. See Griffin [1992], p.414.

¹⁹ So Schenkl, after Richards.

²⁰ At II xiv 26 there is a close parallel.

²¹ E.g. I vi 19; x 10; xvi 15-18; xvii 13-19; xx 16; II xxiv 25-28; III xiii; IV i 104-105; iii 12; *ench* 49; frag III = Stobaeus, *ecl* IV xlv 66.

²² See I vii 32, quoted below, p.134.

logical terminology which we find throughout the *Discourses*. Thus Epictetus will refer to συνημμένα and to διεξευγμένα—to conditionals and disjunctions (I xxix 51; II ix 8); to συμπεπλεγμένα or conjunctions (I xxvi 14; II ix 8²³); to τροπικά or compound propositions (I xxix 40); to arguments which are valid or invalid, συνακτικοί or ασύνακτοι (see *ench* 44);²⁴ to the analysis of universal or καθολικά propositions (II xx 2-3).²⁵ At IV viii 9 he accuses his opponents of ‘supposing’ (θέντες) that someone is a philosopher, of ‘taking’ or ‘assuming’ (λαμβάντες) that he is a dis-graceful character, and of ‘concluding’ (ἐπάγουσι) that philosophy is a waste of time.

The list could easily be lengthened. The items in it come from logic: they are all technical or semi-technical terms. Epictetus uses them without warning; nor does he call any particular attention to them or hint that they might be thought somehow inapposite. Nothing perplexing there—anyone trained in logic will occasionally allow logical vocabulary to slip into his ordinary speech. But the vocabulary indicates that Epictetus’ early studies of logic had made some mark on him, a mark which he took no pains to disguise.

One passage appears to indicate that Epictetus was himself aware of this verbal tic—and that he half apologized for it. In II xii he discusses Socrates’ argumentative technique: Socrates was a skilled dialectician, and he was peculiarly concerned to arrive at correct definitions of things. But

²³ ‘συμπεπλεγμένον’, the standard Stoic term for ‘conjunction’, appears four times in Epictetus. At II ix 8, Epictetus remarks that a συμπεπλεγμένον is ‘saved’ or ‘preserved’ (σώζεται) if it is ‘conjoined from truths [ἐξ ἀληθῶν συμπεπλέχθαι]’: i.e. a συμπεπλεγμένον is true if and only if each of its components is true. Here, then, συμπεπλεγμένα are certainly conjunctions. They are paired with διεξευγμένα or disjunctions. At I xxvi 14 the context gives nothing away; but there is no reason not to take ‘συμπεπλεγμένον’ again to mean ‘conjunction’. The other two occurrences are in *ench*—§§ 36 and 42. Here Simplicius takes the word to mean not ‘conjunction’ but ‘conditional’: his illustrative examples are conditionals, and he gives the explicit gloss ‘τὸ συμπεπλεγμένον ἦτοι συνημμένον’ (in *ench* LIV 25 Hadot). § 42 presumably derives from I xxix 51. There Epictetus refers explicitly and unmistakably to conditionals or συνημμένα. Simplicius perhaps reasoned that, in constructing § 42, Arrian must have intended to retain the sense of I xxix 51, so that in § 42 ‘συμπεπλεγμένον’ must mean ‘conditional’—the change of word imports no change of sense. For § 36, where συμπεπλεγμένα are paired with διεξευγμένα, the corresponding part of *diss* is lost: perhaps there too Arrian changed ‘συνημμένον’ to ‘συμπεπλεγμένον’; or perhaps Simplicius thought that the word should be given the same sense in § 36 as it bore in § 42. In any event, if Simplicius’ comment on these passages is right, then they contain the only surviving examples of ‘συμπεπλεγμένον’ used in the sense of ‘conditional’. (But note Boethius, *hyp syll* I ii 5, where ‘coniunctio’ is used to mean ‘conditional’.) In that case, perhaps *ench* preserves the traces of a heterodox Stoic terminology. Or perhaps Arrian was merely muddled.

²⁴ See below, pp.140-141. – No parallel to this in the extant *Discourses*. (But note II i 3: τὰ ασύνακτα συνάγοντες.)

²⁵ See below, pp.30-31.

he did not say ‘Define envy for me’, and then, when it had been defined, reply: ‘A bad definition—for the definiens is not extensionally equivalent to the definiendum [οὐ ... ἀντακολουθεῖ τῷ κεφαλαιώδει τὸ ὀρικόν]’, ‘thereby using technical terms which laymen find tiresome and difficult to follow—terms which *we* can’t renounce. (II xii 9-10)

‘Socrates did not need to load his talk with technical terminology; but—or so Epictetus seems to confess—I find that I cannot avoid it myself.’

This interpretation is, alas, mistaken. II xii is entitled *Περὶ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι*, and in it Epictetus contrasts the sympathy and skill of Socrates with the bludgeoning practices of his own contemporaries. In the first sentence of the discourse he speaks in the third person of ‘our people’, οἱ ἡμέτεροι. In the second sentence ‘our people’ become ‘us’, and the first person plural is maintained for the rest of the discourse. But it is evident that Epictetus is criticizing his fellow Stoics for their penchant for jargon: he is not beating his own breast; and the first person plural indicates a polite complicity rather than an honest confession. (When I say ‘We philosophers no longer write tolerable English’ I do not intend to criticize myself. On the contrary.)

Nonetheless, confessedly or not, logical terms are pervasive in the *Discourses*. And Epictetus is also pleased to make logical analogies to life. Thus in logical exercises we cannot choose which hypothesis we are to defend: you may not say ‘Give me a different compound proposition’—it is your task to argue from whatever premiss you have been given.²⁶ And so it is with the ‘hypothesis’ on which you must base your life.²⁷ Or again, if you judge a true conditional to be false, then it is you who are condemned, not the conditional: and in the same way if the court wrongly convicts you of impiety, it is the court, and not you, which stands condemned.²⁸ Or again (and less enlighteningly), a conjunction or a disjunction is ‘saved’ if things actually stand as the word ‘conjunction’ or ‘disjunction’ announces or ‘promises’²⁹ that they stand; and a man is saved if he is actually what the term ‘man’ promises that he is.³⁰

²⁶ See below, p.95.

²⁷ I xxix 39-41; cf I xii 17; II v 11. For ‘ὑπόθεσις’ in the sense of ‘role in life’ see e.g. Marcus, VIII i 2; X xxxi 5; XI vii.

²⁸ I xxix 50-51; a comparable analogy at *ench* 42, with conjunctions replacing conditionals (above, n.23).

²⁹ ἐπαγγελία: cf e.g. II ix 1; x 4; III xxiii 10; IV viii 6—the verb ‘ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι’ in roughly the sense of ‘mean’ is common in Stoic and non-Stoic contexts: e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VII 71, 72. (See also below, p.139.)

³⁰ II ix 7-9. – A further such analogy at *ench* 36; and perhaps another at IV viii 12 (‘as Zeno says, you must first learn τὰ τοῦ λόγου στοιχεῖα’)—but this is a notoriously puzzling text: see e.g. Hülser [*1987], pp.82-83.

I do not pretend that Epictetus had enjoyed the logical training of a Galen, or that he had absorbed logic in the way in which Galen had absorbed it. Casual references to logic are not as copious in his writings as they are in the medical treatises of Galen. Nor, of course, did he write works on logic, as Galen was to do. Nonetheless, he learned logic; and it left a mark on his style.³¹

It is natural to wonder how good Epictetus himself was at the subject. The issue is hard to determine: the student error to which he confesses at I vii 32 is of no account; and the *Discourses* are not marked by any great density of argumentation. Of course, Epictetus frequently offers reasons in favour of his contentions—and he frequently offers reasons against contentions which he rejects. But these reasons rarely call for the sort of argumentative complexity which might offer a test of logical competence. (No criticism here: it is precisely what is to be expected in discussions of this general sort.) Passages which seem to shed some light on Epictetus' logical prowess are rare. I may here mention three of them.³²

At II xx, the discourse directed against the Epicureans and the Academic sceptics, Epictetus remarks that

the greatest evidence that something is clear [ἐναργές] is that we find that anyone who opposes it must necessarily make use of it. For example, if someone were to oppose the claim that something universal [καθολικόν] is true, it is clear that he would have to make the contrary assertion: Nothing universal is true. Idiot—not even that. For what is that but 'If something is universal it is false'? (II xx 2-3)

Epictetus here tacitly presupposes the standard Stoic way of formulating universal propositions.³³ 'All As are B' is remodelled as 'If something is A, it is B'; 'No A is B' is remodelled as 'If something is A, it is not B'. And he argues as follows: if you oppose the claim that some universal proposition is true, you thereby affirm that no universal proposition is true. That is to say, you affirm that:

If something is a universal proposition, it is not true.

But what you thereby affirm is itself a universal proposition. Hence it cannot be true. (Suppose that it were true. Then any universal proposition would be false. Hence, being itself a universal proposition, it would be

³¹ 'How thoroughly <logic> was studied is apparent on nearly every page': Hijmans [1959], p.39. An exaggeration—but not wild.

³² On a fourth text, II xxv, see below, pp.59-60.

³³ See Sextus, *M* XI 8-11; cf Sedley [1985].

false. Thus the supposition that it is true leads to a contradiction. Hence it is not true.)

II xx does not set the argument out as cleanly as a modern logician might desire—but the *Discourses* are not, by their nature, expressed in the most precise and pedantic fashion possible. In any event, the argument which Epictetus offers is a good one; and it is not without a certain subtlety. It is an example, and a perfect example, of a self-refutation or *περιτροπή*;³⁴ and it turns on the exotic truth that anything which implies its own negation is itself false. So we shall conclude that Epictetus was reasonably expert in logic? Perhaps. But I doubt if we can put much weight on the text; for I imagine that the example was a standard example, and Epictetus may have lifted it from a handbook.

At the beginning of I viii, where Epictetus is concerned with rhetoric rather than with logic,³⁵ we find—in the standard editions and translations—the following argument:

If you have borrowed and not returned, you owe me the money.
But it is not the case that you have borrowed and not returned.

Therefore: you do not owe me the money.

The argument is invalid—and pretty scandalously so. Epictetus apparently argues according to the schema:

If P, then Q.
Not P.

Therefore: not Q.

The schema is not valid. Nor, so far as I know, did any Stoic ever suggest—crassly or with subtlety—that it was valid. Epictetus has erred.

But in fact it is not Epictetus who has erred: it is his editors and translators. In I viii 2 Epictetus is remarking on the rhetorical practice of collecting groups of equivalent or synonymous expressions, groups of *ισοδυναμοῦντα*.³⁶ The ‘syllogism’ which I have just cited is not offered as

³⁴ On which see Burnyeat [1976]. Neither ‘περιτροπή’ nor the verb ‘περιτρέπειν’ is found in Epictetus.

³⁵ See below, p.58.

³⁶ For the practice in a Stoic context see e.g. Fronto, *eloq* ii 19 [p.114 van den Hout²]. Note that Galen recommends the study of *ισοδυναμοῦντα* in a logical context (*inst log* xvii 5), and that he had written an essay *Περὶ τῶν ἰσοδυναμουσῶν προτάσεων* (*lib prop* XIX 43 Kühn). For the sense of ‘*ισοδυναμεῖν*’ see Barnes [1993a], p.46 n.64; for the importance of such items in connection with what the Stoics called *ὑποσυλλογιστικοί* arguments see *ibid*, pp.45-47.

a syllogism at all: it is offered as an example of a pair of equivalent expressions; and the Greek should be translated thus:

‘If you have borrowed and not repaid, you owe me the money’—‘It is not the case that you have borrowed and not repaid and yet do not owe me the money’.³⁷

This is not a fallacious argument since it is not an argument at all. It is a pair of sentences of the forms:

If P and Q, then R

and

Not ((P and Q) and not R).

Given a certain interpretation of the word ‘if’, the two sentences are indeed logically equivalent to one another.³⁸ Epictetus commits no error. Indeed, the example which he manipulates is relatively complex, and his manipulation betrays a certain sophistication. I do not infer that Epictetus was a competent logician—merely that he was more competent than most of his modern commentators.

The third passage comes at IV i 61 (the context is immaterial). There Epictetus argues as follows:

We conceive that whatever has power to confer the greatest benefit is divine, and then we incorrectly [κακῶς] subjoin: ‘This man has power to confer the greatest benefit’. Necessarily what results from these things is incorrectly inferred [ἀνάγκη καὶ τὸ γινόμενον ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπενεχθῆναι κακῶς].

Now it is natural enough to suppose that we ‘incorrectly subjoin’ the second premiss precisely insofar as that premiss is false. It is then easy to suppose that we ‘incorrectly infer’ the conclusion precisely insofar as the conclusion is false. Hence Epictetus is maintaining that if you have a false proposition

³⁷ εἰ δανείσω καὶ μὴ ἀπέδωκας, ὀφείλεις μοι τὸ ἀργύριον· οὐχὶ ἐδανείσω καὶ οὐκ ἀπέδωκας οὐ μὴν ὀφείλεις μοι τὸ ἀργύριον. – Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.123, emends the text in order to ensure that the ‘conclusion’ is clearly marked; Schenkl mispunctuates; and the passage is mistranslated by Oldfather (who also fails to see that ‘τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον’ is adverbial—‘τοῦτον’ is not ‘this syllogism’), and by Souilhé, Laurenti and Carter/Hard.

³⁸ Construe ‘if’ in the ‘Philonian’ sense (below, p.103), so that a conditional is false when and only when its antecedent is true and its consequent false. Then ‘If A, then B’ will be false when and only when ‘A’ is true and ‘B’ is false; hence when and only when ‘A’ and ‘Not B’ are both true; hence when and only when ‘A and not B’ is true; hence when and only when ‘Not (A and not B)’ is false.

among the premisses of an argument, then the conclusion of the argument will necessarily be false. And this is an elementary howler: as Aristotle was the first to observe, you may validly infer a true conclusion from premisses some or all of which are false.³⁹

But I do not think that we need ascribe this howler—or any other howler—to Epictetus. No doubt what makes it incorrect to subjoin the premiss in question is the fact that it is false—but ‘incorrectly subjoin’ does not therefore mean ‘subjoin something false’. Hence we have no reason to think that ‘incorrectly infer’ must mean ‘infer a false conclusion’. An inference is, I suppose, an operation which takes us from a set of beliefs to a further belief;⁴⁰ and one chief point of drawing an inference is to increase our stock of true beliefs. Thus we might reasonably call an inference ‘correct’ insofar as it takes us reliably to a true belief; and an inference will be incorrect insofar as it does not take us reliably to a true belief. In that case, an inference from premisses some of which are false will indeed be an incorrect inference. An argument with false premisses may be valid (so that if its premisses were all true, then its conclusion would also be true); and an argument with false premisses may have a true conclusion. But such an argument is not a ‘true’ argument, as the Stoics put it;⁴¹ and if you use it to infer a conclusion, then you have no guarantee that the conclusion will be true.

It may be said that even if IV i 61 does not contain a howler, it at least gives the impression of containing one; and that is not the mark of a good logician. Perhaps that is just. I do not want to claim that Epictetus was a wizard at deduction. But although I do not find in the *Discourses*—and do not expect to find—any positive evidence that Epictetus was a clever logician, I do not find any negative evidence that he was a bad logician.

§ B: The fashion for logic

Galen bewails the fact that his contemporaries do not give a hoot for logic. Seneca does not. Indeed, the fact that he inveighs against logic-chopping suggests—as I have already argued—that logic-chopping was a popular hobby in his time. Epictetus also inveighs against logic—and again the consequence is easily drawn. But with Epictetus we do not need to rely on our own uncertain inferences: Epictetus himself roundly states what Seneca merely suggests.

³⁹ See Patzig [1968], pp.196-203. – You might perhaps take ‘incorrectly infer’ to mean ‘invalidly infer’: then Epictetus’ howler would be even more grotesque—he would be implicitly supposing that you cannot make valid inferences from false premisses.

⁴⁰ See below, p.123.

⁴¹ See below, p.102.

Contemporary philosophers [οἱ νῦν φιλόσοφοι] abandon the first area [τόπος] of the subject, and also the second, and they devote themselves to the third: changing arguments, arguments which conclude by way of questioning,⁴² hypothetical arguments, lying arguments.⁴³ (III ii 6)

Philosophy has three ‘areas’ or τόποι, the third of which includes—and is perhaps exhausted by—logic. And Epictetus’ contemporaries give themselves wholly to this third area—to logic.

The three τόποι here are not the three traditional parts of philosophy,⁴⁴ and Epictetus is not complaining that his contemporaries devote themselves exclusively to λογική, to the logical part of philosophy. Rather, they are ‘the three areas in which anyone who is to be noble and good [καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός], must train himself’ (III ii 1): the first area concerns desires and disinclinations—the management of the passions; the second concerns impulses and aversions—the management of the appetite; and the third concerns assent—the management of the intellect.

The three τόποι are referred to elsewhere by Epictetus.⁴⁵ Some scholars hold that the triad is an original invention of Epictetus’ own; that it constitutes a system or a theory; and that it had some historical influence, notably on Marcus. Now it is true that Marcus does allude once or twice to the τόποι;⁴⁶ but I am not persuaded that the system made any great mark on him, still less that it pervades the *Meditations*.⁴⁷ Indeed, I confess that words such as ‘system’ and ‘theory’ seem to me overblown in this connection; and the three-fold distinction seems little more than a convenient expository device. The bare facts are these: in a dozen or so places Epictetus makes a distinction among three different areas in which you should train yourself, and he marks a hierarchy among them. This distinction may indeed be original to him—although he does not himself claim, or even suggest, such originality.⁴⁸ He uses the distinction as though it would be familiar to his audience, or at least obvious to them; but he does not harp on it. Elsewhere

⁴² On this curious phrase see below, pp.136-137.

⁴³ I.e. versions of the Liar paradox—not ‘lying’ (Long), nor ‘false reasonings’ (Souilhé). – Oldfather’s translation contains a number of errors in the last sentence of this extract.

⁴⁴ Pace Bonhöffer [1890], pp.18-28; Hadot [1978], pp.69-70. But the pages in Bonhöffer and Hadot nevertheless contain the two best discussions of Epictetus’ τόποι—see also Hijmans [1959], pp.64-68; Hadot [*1996], pp.149-151.

⁴⁵ See I iv 11-12; xvii 22-24; III ii 1-4; cf I xxi 2; II xvii 15-16, 31-33; III xii 13; xxvi 14; IV i 68-75; iv 13; x 13.

⁴⁶ Or at any rate, he hints at them in a few passages (e.g. VIII vii 1; IX vii)—although he does not use the word ‘τόπος’ save at IX xxxvii, where he is paraphrasing Epictetus (= Epictetus, frag XXVII).

⁴⁷ Pace Hadot [1978]. Note that, were Hadot right, then—given his (mistaken) identification of the three τόποι with the three parts of philosophy—, it would follow that Marcus did after all apply himself to logic and physics as well as to ethics.

⁴⁸ Note that Seneca ascribes a comparable (five-fold) distinction to the Cyrenaics (*ep* lxxxix 12); and that he himself offers a similar three-fold distinction (§ 14).

he is content to introduce a different triad of τόποι.⁴⁹ And in general, he is ready enough—like other ancient philo-sophers—to use the word ‘τόπος’ for an area of thought without having any particular cartography in mind.⁵⁰

However that may be, contemporary philosophers spend all their time on the third, logical, area; and what is more (or so Epictetus’ choice of illustrative examples seems to imply) they devote their time to logical problems which have no evident links with moral philosophy—let alone with moral practice. The phrase ‘οἱ νῦν φιλόσοφοι’ presumably embraces teachers of philosophy. And Epictetus assures us that the pupils aped their teachers. The showy young logician is a figure in Epictetus’ Rogues Gallery, where his portrait hangs alongside those of the time-serving politician and the smug *paterfamilias*. For it was not merely that the young sucked up logic in school: they took it home with them, and they took it out to dinner-parties.

Flash Harries frequent the philosophers with the specific aim of learning logic.⁵¹ They bone up on the subject in order that they may display at a banquet their subtle knowledge of hypothetical syllogistic—and thereby win the admiration of the senator sitting next to them (I xxvi 9).⁵² The sophisms and conundrums were particularly eligible objects for ostentation:

And as for the Master Argument, what have I⁵³ got to say about it? If I am a vain man, I thoroughly amaze the guests at a banquet by enumerating the men who have discussed it: ‘Chrysippus wrote splendidly about it in the first book of *On the Possible*. Cleanthes wrote a special work on the subject, and so did Archedemus. Antipater wrote about it too—not only in *On the Possible* but also separately in *On the Master*. Haven’t you read the work?’—‘No.’—‘Oh, do read it’. (II xix 8-10)

Party bores bored with logic.

Plutarch had ‘often’ found it necessary to reproach guests who ‘dragged the Master Argument into drinking parties’.⁵⁴ Aulus Gellius tells a story of a tiresome young man, a self-professed Stoic, who entertained the dinner-guests of Herodes Atticus by explaining to them how he alone had solved all the Stoic ἄπορα—the Master Argument and the Sorites ‘and other riddles of that sort [*aliosque id genus griphos*]’ (I ii 3-4). Such behaviour

⁴⁹ See *ench* 52 (below, pp.38-39): it is plain that this is a *different* triad; plain too that it does not correspond to the three parts of philosophy.

⁵⁰ E.g. I xxviii 29; II i 3; xix 6; xxiii 31; IV ii 1; iv 13.

⁵¹ See II xviii 3, 34; xxi 17; III xxvi 13.

⁵² Cf e.g. Plutarch, *prof virt* 78EF, who aptly cites Plato, *Rep* 539B, on the dangers of allowing young men to sharpen their claws on logic.

⁵³ ‘I’ here does not designate Epictetus: see below, pp.44-45.

⁵⁴ *quaest conviv* 615A—from the first question of the work, entitled ‘εἰ δεῖ φιλοσοφεῖν παρὰ πότον’; cf e.g. *prof virt* 80A; Lucian, *Gallus* 1 [718-719].

would not have pleased the Old Stoics, if Persaeus is to be trusted: according to him, ‘if logicians gathered for a drink and then discussed syllogisms, you would judge that they were acting inappropriately to the occasion’ (Athenaeus, 607B).⁵⁵ Nor did it please Herodes Atticus: he instructed a servant to fetch a book from his library, which he then read—in reproof—to the obnoxious youth. The book contained the *Discourses* of ‘that admirable old man’ Epictetus. And Gellius cites II xix 12-17, from the very discourse which I have just quoted. Of course, it is all too pat, and I fear that Gellius embroidered—if he did not simply invent⁵⁶—his little anecdote. Nonetheless, *ben trovato*.

It is easy to see how logic came to charm. After all, we cannot study anything at all without some minimal reflection on language and some minimal employment of logic. It is precisely for this reason that

some people are captured and detained by these things—one by language [λέξις],⁵⁷ another by syllogisms, another by changing arguments, another by some other lodging-house of this sort. And they remain there and rot, as though they were among the Sirens. (II xxiii 41)

The same thought, without the Sirens, has already been cited from Seneca.⁵⁸

Aulus Gellius again echoes Epictetus. He remarks on the curious nature of logical study: at first it seems rough and uninviting and useless; but then, as you make progress in it, it comes to seem sweeter—indeed,

there follows a sort of insatiable lust for learning; and if you do not set a limit to it there will be no small danger that, like many others, you too will grow old in those whirls and eddies of dialectic, as though you were on the Sirens’ rocks. (XVI viii 16-17)

⁵⁵ But the Platonist Taurus encouraged the discussion of logical issues at his ungastronomic symposia: Gellius, VII xiii. (On philosophical symposia see Tecusan [1993].)

⁵⁶ So, apparently, Holford-Strevens [1988], pp.48-49 (cf. p.206, for Gellius and Epictetus). Observe that Gellius himself seems fond enough of logical puzzles: V x; xi; IX xvi; XVI ii; XVII 9; xiii. – On Gellius and philosophy see also Goulet [1989e].

⁵⁷ On Epictetus’ attitude to rhetoric see below, p.58. – The same complaint—that students of philosophy would get side-tracked by an interest in style and rhetoric—is found in e.g. Seneca, *ep* cviii 6; Plutarch, *aud rat* 42E. Note that philosophical works were read in the rhetorical schools (e.g. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *imit* iv 4 [pp.210-211 Usener]; Quintilian, X i 35-36; XII ii 1-10; Tacitus, *dial* xxxi 5-7; Dio Chrysostom, xviii 13; cf. e.g. Stempler [1912], pp.110-114); and that Plato in particular—although he had his detractors (e.g. Lucian, *rhet praec* 19)—was generally regarded as a model of good style (e.g. Plutarch, *prof virt* 79D; Lucian, *lexiph* 22; Gellius, I ix 10; XVII xx 6; [Longinus], xiii 3, with Russell *ad loc*; cf. Walsdorff [1927]; de Lacy [1974]; Trapp [1990]; Dörrie and Baltes [*1990], pp.369-403; Brunt [1994], p.37). – And let me here paraphrase a later text: ‘Plato is now ἐν χερσὶ τῶν δοκοῦντων εἶναι φιλολόγων μόνον, while many people read Epictetus in the hope of improving their lives’ (Origen, *c Cels* VI 2).

⁵⁸ *ep* cxi 5: above, p.14.

I suppose that Gellius took his Sirens from Epictetus—though the image is banal enough in itself.⁵⁹

And there is also this text from Fronto:

So you may see the orator despised and held in no honour, while the logicians [*dialecticos*] are esteemed and cultivated inasmuch as in their arguments there is always something obscure and twisted—and so it comes about that a pupil always sticks to his master and serves him, bound and held, as it were, in permanent chains. (*eloq* iv 10 [p.150 van den Hout²])

The Siren-song seduced, and it detained.

Other texts might readily be added. Thus it is worth remarking that Lucian's numerous jibes against the Stoics frequently accuse them of logic-chopping.⁶⁰ And there is a choice passage from Fronto's contemporary, Maximus of Tyre:

If someone says that *this* is what philosophy is—verbs and nouns, arts of arguments, refutations and confutations and sophisms, and hours spent on all these things—then it is not hard to find a teacher. You will find every place stuffed with such sophists: the thing is in plentiful supply and appears everywhere. I dare say that there are more teachers than pupils of this sort of philosophy. But if these things are a small portion of philosophy—a portion which it is disgraceful not to know but not splendid to know—then let us avoid disgrace and know these things; but let us not preen ourselves on them. (*diss* i 8)

That logic excited and enticed was a commonplace.

Thus if we consider what Epictetus—and his colleagues—actually say and imply about contemporary intellectual life, we see a picture quite different from the one painted by the common view of imperial Stoicism. Epictetus' contemporaries were not blinkered moralists, ignoring the logical studies which the Old Stoa had patronized. On the contrary, philosophy—Stoic philosophy—had virtually reduced itself to logic. The philosophers themselves think only of their syllogisms. Their young pupils are schooled in logical technique and can find no better conversation at the dinner-table than hypothetical inferences and the Master Argument.

No doubt Epictetus is exaggerating. No doubt there is a basis of truth behind the exaggeration. Logic, not ethics (and not physics), was the

⁵⁹ See e.g. Cicero, *fin* V xviii 49; Plutarch, *aud poet* 15D-16A; Sextus, *M* I 41-43; and e.g. Euripides, *Androm* 936.

⁶⁰ See e.g. *dial mort* i 2 [332]; *symp* 23 [435]; *vit auct* 22-23 [562-563]; *Hermot* 81 [824-826]. See Helm [1902], pp.266-278.

fashionable part of philosophy. When Epictetus fulminates—or seems to fulminate—against logic, he is not ‘typical of his age’, an age which despised logic and cared only to keep its ethics warm. On the contrary, he was crying in the wilderness and swimming against the tide: he was not keeping up with the Joneses, nor were the Joneses keeping up with him.

§ C: Against logic?

The common view that ethics dominated imperial Stoicism is false: Epictetus confirms what Seneca implies—that matters were quite otherwise. But the common view may draw in its horns. ‘Perhaps after all (the revised and hornless view goes)—perhaps after all, *hoi polloi* were logically minded; perhaps logic was indeed a popular pastime. But the great and serious philosophers of the age were thorough-going moralists: they at least had no time for logic. At any rate, Seneca and Epictetus, who chiefly represent imperial Stoic philosophy for us, were no logicians.’ I have already urged that this is an inadequate characterisation of Seneca’s attitude towards logic. Is it any more adequate with regard to Epictetus?

Certainly, Epictetus was hostile to the fashionable interest in logic. Certainly, his texts contain numerous criticisms of logic—or at least of logic-addicts. And it will be best to start by looking at one or two of these hostile passages.

The Sirens of logic, according to Epictetus, detain us in the wrong τόπος or area of philosophy. The end of the *Encheiridion* distinguishes three areas or τόποι:

The first and most necessary area in philosophy concerns the use of theorems—for example, not to tell lies.⁶¹ The second concerns proofs—for example, why is it that we should not tell lies? The third confirms and articulates the proofs themselves—for example, why is this a proof? (What is a proof? what is implication? conflict? truth? falsity?) Now the third area is necessary because of the second, and the second because of the first. And the first is the most necessary and the area in which we should take our rest. But as for us,⁶² we do the opposite: we spend our time in the third area and all our efforts are concerned with it. We completely neglect the first area. Hence we tell lies—and are ready to show how it is proved that we should not tell lies. (*ench* 52)⁶³

⁶¹ ‘ψεύδεσθαι’: Hadot [*1996], p.150 n.22, prefers to take the verb here in its larger sense of ‘make mistakes’.

⁶² The first person plural is not a piece of self-incrimination: it is, again, the plural of polite complicity (see above, p.29).

⁶³ Nothing in the extant *Discourses* corresponds to this important text: presumably it paraphrases something from the lost books.

Why do we languish in the third area? Why do the Sirens of logic enchant us? Their song is seductive because we are both indolent and vain.

We are indolent. We boast about our logical powers: 'Bring me any syllogism and I'll tell you about it. I'm skilled enough there. But in life it is all the reverse—ignorance and inexperience, ἀμαθία καὶ ἀπειρία' (II iii 4-5).⁶⁴ For logic is a lot easier than life:

If the woman is willing, and if she nods to me and beckons me, and if she fondles me and snuggles up to me—if I then hold aloof and conquer, *that* is a sophism above the Liar and above the Sorites—you're entitled to be proud about *that*, not about propounding the Master Argument. (II xviii 18)

There are no temptations in logic which we must struggle to resist. Or at any rate, the temptations of the Liar are somewhat easier to resist than the blandishments of Lais.⁶⁵

We are vain. And if we study logic,

it will not merely be an additional distraction from more necessary matters, but no ordinary occasion of pride and pretentiousness. ... By what device could you now persuade a young man who excelled in these things that he should not become an appendage to them but they to him? He proudly tramples all our reasons underfoot and walks about puffed up and unable to bear it if you tap his shoulder and remind him of what he has lost and where he has strayed. (I viii 6, 9-10)

Logic feeds our vanity; and it is a self-sustaining vanity—for who is harder to persuade than a *soi-disant* master of persuasive argument?⁶⁶

Idle and arrogant, seduced by the Sirens, we linger in the third area. But that, surely, cannot be all that there is to philosophy?

Is *that* why you left home? Is *that* why you wanted to meet someone who might benefit you? What benefit? So that you might analyse syllogisms more readily and explore the hypothetical arguments? Is *that* the reason why you abandoned your brother, your country, your friends, your relatives—so that you could learn all *that* and then return home? (III xxiv 78)⁶⁷

⁶⁴ On this passage see below, pp.83-85.

⁶⁵ For which see Sextus, *M* IX 153.

⁶⁶ Cf II xx 37, on the invincible stubbornness of Academic and Epicurean dogmatists. On the correct attitude for the expert logician to take see II vi 4.

⁶⁷ On the notion of leaving house and home to seek a teacher see I iv 22; III xxi 8; xxiii 32; Dio Chrysostom, xii 10; Matthew, xix 29.

Epictetus' questions are rhetorical. Had a student taken them seriously, he might well have answered them with a cheery affirmative: 'Yes—that is precisely why I left home to study at Nicopolis'. Nor, when he returned home, would his parents always have been distressed—the rich father of I xxii 18 gives this advice to his son: 'Learn syllogisms from the philosophers—but as to what you ought to do, you yourself know that better than the philosophers do'.

For my part, I sympathize with the student and with his father. But Epictetus is of another mind. If that is what you think, he grumbles, then 'go home and sit in a corner;⁶⁸ weave your syllogisms and propound them to your friends'.⁶⁹ You go to your philosophy school in order to learn logic; and you will learn nothing more. But it is not merely that you do logic instead of doing other things. The third area is not, after all, just another part of the wood: logic actually bears on conduct, so that what you learn in logic you should apply in life. And what happens? You learn to prove that you should not tell lies—and you lie through your teeth. Logic lovers are not like people who read novels rather than works of history; they are not even like people who read works of history rather than enter political life: they are like people who read medical text-books—and then, when they fall ill, never think of applying what they have read.⁷⁰

This is a particular case of a general complaint, common enough in any school and in any age.⁷¹ Students of philosophy learn to talk, and they do not learn to act; they 'take up the teachings of the philosophers only to talk about them [μέχρι λόγου μόνον]' (title of II xix). 'They philosophize without acting—only as far as talking [ἄνευ τοῦ πράττειν, μέχρι τοῦ λέγειν]'.⁷² They are 'lions at school, foxes abroad'.⁷³ The pupils are only imitating their masters. For the adulterer who pleads in his defence 'But I'm a scholar—my mind is on Archedemus [ἀλλὰ φιλόλογός εἰμι καὶ Ἀρχέδημον νοῶ]' is probably a teacher of philosophy—no doubt a logician, and a Stoic logician (II iv 10-11).

⁶⁸ Cf I xxix 54—below, p.56.

⁶⁹ II xiii 26; cf. e.g. III xxiv 81.

⁷⁰ The third comparison is from Simplicius, *in ench.* LXVII 29-32 Hadot.

⁷¹ Brunt [1979], p.496 n.28, remarks that Epictetus, II xix 20, 'suggests that most persons with a dilettante interest in philosophy were Epicureans'. What Epictetus says is this:

Observe yourselves in your actions and you will know what sect you belong to—most of you will find that you are Epicureans, a few of you that you are Peripatetics (but Peri-patetics of the flabby kind).

This is not a sociological comment on the distribution of dilettantes among the Schools: it is a typically caustic criticism of *soi-disant* Stoics. (See below, n.88.)

⁷² frag X = Gellius XVII xix 1 (citing Favorinus who cites Epictetus).

⁷³ IV v 37; see also, e.g. II i 30-34; x 29-30; xviii 26; II xvi 1; III v 15-17; vii 18; xx 18; xxi 10; xxiv 16, 38-40; xxvi 13, 16-20 IV i 138; vi 12; cf e.g. Musonius, frag 14 [p.76.14-17 Hense] = Stobaeus, *ecl* IV xxia 20; Simplicius, *in ench.* praef 12-14 Hadot.

There are two rather different complaints here: a complaint that philosophers do not let their philosophy impinge upon their actions, and a complaint that philosophers act against their philosophical convictions. The first of the two complaints accuses philosophers of intellectual ‘compartmentalism’: they hold their philosophical beliefs in a separate part of their minds and do not imagine that such beliefs might have any causal intercourse with the rest of their lives. Such men might, in principle, act in accordance with their philosophical beliefs: the charge against them is not that they act *against* their philosophy; it is rather that, whatever they may do, they do not do it *because of* their philosophy. The second complaint accuses the philosophers of hypocrisy—and usually of immorality. They preach one set of beliefs and they act on another; they urge us not to tell untruths, and they lie with the best.

Epicetetus does not distinguish between these two complaints; and in effect he supposes that if you only philosophize ‘as far as talking’, then you are bound to show yourself ‘a fox abroad’. No doubt there were many foxes abroad, then as now; no doubt there were self-styled Stoics who were thoroughly obnoxious creatures. One such case is celebrated. In 66 A.D. Publius Egnatius Celer bore witness against Barea Soranus and his daughter Servilia—to both of whom he had taught Stoic philosophy. He lied in court—and they were condemned to death. Three years later Musonius Rufus charged Celer with his crime; and despite the fact that the Cynic philosopher Demetrius spoke in his defence, Celer was condemned by Domitian. It is not an uplifting story.⁷⁴

History apart, the immoral philosopher had long been a stock figure: ‘I hate men who are rotten in their actions and philosophical in their remarks’ said Pacuvius⁷⁵—and he is echoed in a hundred texts.⁷⁶ Lucian is particularly keen on the matter. His *Symposium* is entirely devoted to it. Zeus’ tirade against the philosophers at *Icar* 29-32 makes the same point in pithier fashion. And there are a dozen other Lucianic passages. It is equally a theme in Seneca,⁷⁷ who remarks that the objection ‘You say one thing and you live another [*aliter loqueris aliter vivis*]’ had been brought against Plato and Epicurus and Zeno the Stoic (*vit beat* xviii 1), and against Aristotle and Democritus and Socrates (xxvii 5). And the accusers are delighted with their accusations—for if the great moralists were themselves dogs beneath the skin, why should we not all trot along the primrose path (xix 1-3)? The

⁷⁴ See Tacitus, *ann* XVI 32; *hist* IV 10; 40: Moles [1983].

⁷⁵ *odi homines ignava opera et philosopha sententia* (cited by Gellius, XIII viii 4).

⁷⁶ See e.g. Antigonos of Carystus on Pyrrho (ὁ φίλος ἔλεγεν ὡς οὐ μὴν ποιῆσαι σύμφωνά τοις λόγοις: Eusebius, *PE* XIV xviii 26); Nepos in a letter to Cicero (frag 39 Marshall = Lactantius, *inst div* III xv 10); Seneca, *ep* xx 1; xxix 4-8; Gellius, X xxii (citing Plato); Athenaeus, 565DF (on Stoics, citing Antigonos of Carystus)—other texts in Festugière [1960], pp.140-142.

⁷⁷ See esp *vit beat* xviii-xxii.

accusations, Seneca insists, are false (see *ot vi* 5); but they were commonly repeated and no doubt commonly believed.⁷⁸

Philosophy was the art of life. The abstract question ‘*Can* you live your philosophy?’ was posed often and seriously—and not only in connexion with the Pyrrhonian sceptics.⁷⁹ But the more personal question was more insidious: *Do* you live your philosophy? Some philosophers did indeed live their philosophy—or were deemed to do so. Thus the decree in which the Athenians honoured Zeno the Stoic states that ‘he made an example of his own life, which was consistent with every word which he spoke’ (Diogenes Laertius, VII 10). Similarly, on a less exalted level, Nepos praises Atticus: ‘He had such a firm grasp on the doctrines of the chief philosophers that he used them to manage his life and not for ostentation’ (*Att xvii* 3). And again—a delectable example—consider Galen’s self-congratulations: ‘I am a good doctor and a good man—for (unlike my colleagues) I do what I recommend others to do’ (*ord lib prop XIX* 53 Kühn).⁸⁰

Concordet sermo cum vita, let your words and your deeds be in harmony (Seneca, *ep lxxv* 4): the injunction was a commonplace; and so too was the claim that few philosophers heeded it.⁸¹ The call to apply your philosophical doctrines to your life is a special case of the injunction; and the demand that logical expertise be used in practical life is a special case of the call.

⁷⁸ On ‘philosophical invective’ see e.g. Sedley [1976]; Owen [1983].

⁷⁹ See e.g. Aristocles, *apud* Eusebius, *PE* XIV xviii 26, for the complaint against the Pyrrhonians; Plutarch, *non posse* (for the Epicureans); and Colotes’ polemic (Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι κατὰ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων φιλοσόφων δόγματα οὐδὲ ζῆν ἔστι), known from Plutarch, *adv Col* (for pretty well everyone else).

⁸⁰ I should also cite Simplicius’ eulogy of Epictetus:

This is the man who says ‘Lameness restricts the legs, not the will [προαίρεσις]—unless the will itself wishes it to’: he based his words on his life, and did not strive—as most of us do—to say whatever might be deemed to earn praise. (*in ench XV* 45–49 Hadot)

And note the anecdote about Plutarch and his slave: Gellius, I xxvi 6–7.

⁸¹ Cf Friedländer [1920], III, pp.260–265; Cherniss [*1976], pp.412–413; Holford-Strevens [1988], p.192 n.2; Declava Caizzi [1993], pp.316–323; Mansfeld [1994], pp.183–191.

§ D: Exegesis

And so we do nothing but talk. But there is worse than that; for the talk itself is second-hand, mere bookishness. We philosophers love our books—they take the place of life in our lives, and we will not be parted from them.⁸² Asked what moral progress I have made, I reply: ‘Take up the volume *On Impulse* [Περὶ ὁρμῆς] and see how well I’ve read it’ (I iv 14)—as though virtue were simply a matter of knowing my Chrysippus (§ 7), as though I had left home to acquire book-learning (§ 22).⁸³

Or again, every moment of our lives we are struck by a hundred impressions, some of them cognitive or καταληπτικαί and others not. What *ought* we to do? Evidently, we ought to attempt to discriminate among these impressions, to determine which are genuinely cognitive and which false or feeble. What *do* we do? We pick up a book entitled *On Cognition*, Περὶ καταλήψεως, and start to read from it.

What is the reason for this? It’s because we have never read anything and we have never written anything in order that in our actions we might take the impressions which strike us and use them according to nature. Rather, we stop when⁸⁴ we have learned what is said and can explain it [ἐξηγήσασθαι] to other people, when we can analyse the syllogisms and explore the hypothetical arguments. (IV iv 13-14)

We talk—but we talk about what we have read. No wonder we never proceed beyond talk to action. Here is one of Epictetus’ most common laments: we read our philosophical texts, we learn what others have written, we produce an ἐξήγησις—an interpretation, a commentary, an *explication de texte*. And then we sit back, the task accomplished.⁸⁵

We are set to read the works of Chrysippus. They are difficult. In order to understand them, we reasonably seek out a commentary or an interpreter—and then we repeat what we have read, or perhaps even essay an explanation ourselves. Yet why read Chrysippus in the first place? Well, Chrysippus too is an interpreter or commentator; but what he interprets and explains is Nature. And that is surely the only reason why we should read him: not in order to be able to interpret his writings, but in order— thanks to his writings—to be able to interpret nature.⁸⁶ Equally, it may be assumed,

⁸² See esp. IV iv.

⁸³ Cf IV iv 16-17.

⁸⁴ Adding ‘ἐν τῷ’ (Richards) before ‘μαθεῖν’.

⁸⁵ See e.g. II vii 3-4; IV iii 12; and for other remarks on interpreters: I iv 22; II ix 14-19; xvi 34; xxi 10; III xxi 7; IV iv 14; *ench* 49.

⁸⁶ I xvii 13-19; cf vi 19 (we are here to be spectators and interpreters of God’s words); II vii 3; IV iii 12. – Note also Galen, *us part* III 16 Kühn: Aristotle was δεινότητος ... τέχνην φύσεως ἐξηγήσασθαι. On such (standard) uses of ‘ἐξηγεῖσθαι’ see Mansfeld [1994],

we may quite properly read and interpret Chrysippus' works on ethics. But with what aim should we do so? Not in order to become experts in Chrysippean exegesis, but in order to become experts, thanks to Chrysippus, in the art of life: in order to become good men.

Yet we stop at Chrysippus and forget about Nature and the Good. What could be more foolish? What less philosophical? Progress, *προκοπή*, is not made by devouring heaps of Chrysippean writings (I iv 5-9). As for commentaries, we may write them by the score: it will do us no good. A book sells for a shilling—a commentator is worth no more (§§ 14-16).⁸⁷ If our desires are not in accord with nature, and 'if we do not ensure that correct beliefs are active, then we shall be no more than interpreters of other men's opinions' (II ix 14); and the words we utter will come from our lips and not from our hearts (§ 17). Indeed, if commentary is the end and stopping-point, we might as well sit down and study the texts of Epicurus; for the mere conning of texts, even of the best Stoic texts, will not turn us into Stoics (§§ 18-19).⁸⁸

I shall cite a further passage on this score, since it has been often misunderstood. It comes from the discourse on the Master Argument. Having explained what the Argument is, Epictetus remarks:

Now if someone asks me 'But which of the premisses do *you* accept?', I will answer that I don't know, but⁸⁹ that I have learned the following account: 'Diodorus accepted these, and Panthoides (I think) and Cleanthes those, and Chrysippus the others.'—'And *you*?—'Oh, I am not made for this sort of thing, for testing my own impressions and comparing what people say and forming an opinion of my own in the area [τόπον]'. (II xix 5-6)

The passage has been treated as another of the texts in which Epictetus takes a swipe at logic. For surely the final response is intended to distance Epictetus from the Master Argument: *he* is not cut out to think about logical puzzles; *he*—we infer—looks to another and higher philosophical goal.⁹⁰

pp.153-154. (But there is no reason to infer that the verb 'ἐξηγεῖσθαι' is ambiguous: rather, there are (at least) two different sorts of object on which we may practise exegesis—we may try to explain and understand what happens and we may try to explain and understand what someone has said or written.)

⁸⁷ Cf e.g. I xvii 13-19 (with 29); II xvii 34-35; III ii 13; xxi 7 (with *ench* 49).

⁸⁸ Cf. II xix 20-24; and on pseudo-Stoics see also II vii 18; xxiv 38 (cf Gellius, I ii 6)—above, n.71.

⁸⁹ Placing a comma rather than a colon after 'οἷδα': 'but that ...' is part of the imagined answer to the imagined question.

⁹⁰ So e.g. Schweighäuser [*1799], II pp.523-524; Bonhöffer [1890], p.7 (citing also I xxvii 15 and II xviii 18 to show that Epictetus 'confesses his ignorance with regard to the more difficult problems of logic and epistemology'); Bonhöffer [1894], p.123; Hijmans [1959], p.39 (who, however, strangely suggests that Epictetus is telling 'a fib'); Hershbell [1993], p.143.

The general sense of the text is exactly the opposite.⁹¹ Epictetus is speaking with heavy irony—or else, which comes to the same thing, he is speaking in inverted commas and with the voice of an imaginary interlocutor.⁹² For it is Epictetus' settled and repeated view that he, and all men, are obliged to judge their own impressions: the one thing which the gods have left in our power is the use of our impressions, and the one area in which our duty lies is their management.⁹³ 'Oh, *I* am not made for this sort of thing': on the contrary, you are made precisely for this sort of thing. Far from confessing to a dilettante interest in the doxography on the Master Argument and denying any need to produce a judgement of his own on the substantial issues which the Argument raises, Epictetus insists—how could the point have been missed?—that we must judge the Argument for ourselves; and he deplores mere doxography. If all I know is what Diodorus and the rest maintained, then 'as far as that is concerned, I am no different from a philologist [γραμματικός]' who comments learnedly on the poems of Homer (II xix 7).⁹⁴

If we refuse to judge for ourselves, even in arcane matters of logic, if we remain interpreters and commentators of the judgements of other men, we cease to play our allotted role in the universal comedy.

Epictetus was neither unique nor original in complaining that men had become bookworms. Marcus later flogged himself with the same whip: 'Give up this thirst for books, lest you die grumbling'⁹⁵ (II iii 3). And Alexander of Aphrodisias remarked, naturally enough, that 'today most philosophical gatherings [συνουσίαι]' are based on books (*in Top* 27.12-14). Earlier, Plutarch had reported it as a common opinion—an opinion which he himself vehemently and virtuously rejected—that a philosopher is 'a man who argues from his professorial chair and gives his lectures on books' (*sen ger* 796D). And Seneca had earlier developed the idea in terms very similar to those used by Epictetus (*ep* xxxiii 7-10). It is the idea underlying Seneca's celebrated aphorism that philosophy has become philology: *quae philosophia fuit facta philologia est* (*ep* cviii 23):

⁹¹ If you are determined that Epictetus declines to interest himself in the Master Argument, then (like, e.g. Carter/Hard) you must follow Upton and emend the text ('οὐδὲν γέγονα' for 'οὐδὲ γέγονα')—see Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.523 (who rejects the emendation and still misunderstands the text).

⁹² Compare I xxvii 15: of Academic and Pyrrhonian arguments Epictetus says that 'for my part, I've no time for these things, and I can't plead in favour of common sense'. The last thing which Epictetus intends us to infer from his remarks is that he has no time for such things and cannot plead in favour of common sense.

⁹³ See below, p.61.

⁹⁴ For 'philologists' in Epictetus see also III ii 13; on the terms 'γραμματικός' and 'φιλόλογος' see e.g. Pfeiffer [1968], pp.156-159; Pépin [1992].

⁹⁵ γογγύζων: the verb is used by Epictetus at I xxix 54 (below, p.56), to which Marcus perhaps alludes; and cf IV i 79.

philosophers are no different from scholars (*philologus aut grammaticus*) who ask learned and futile questions about Ennius or Vergil (§ 35):

everything they say and spout to a listening throng is foreign to them [*aliena*]: 'Plato said this, Zeno said that, Chrysippus and Posidonius said the other thing'. (§ 38)⁹⁶

Later, Galen, a great writer of books and a voluminous commentator, was aware of the existence of such gibes; for in one of his pharmacological works he affirms—am I wrong in detecting a defensive tone?—that

no doubt what most of the craftsmen say is true enough—that it is by no means the same thing to learn from the living voice [παρὰ ζώσης φωνῆς] and to read something out of a book. But if you are industrious and naturally intelligent, you may get no small benefit from reading a book which is knowledgeably written ... (*comp med loc* XII 894 Kühn)

And so Galen himself will continue to write. And to write.

The generic objurcation, that to the reading of many books there is no end, took a variety of specific forms. Galen's craftsmen contrasted book-learning with learning παρὰ ζώσης φωνῆς, from the living voice of a master; and the notion that word of mouth—if possible, word from the horse's mouth—is generally better than a written record is expressed in numerous texts, Greek and Latin, pagan and Christian.⁹⁷ Connoisseurs of ancient philosophy will think first of Plato's *Phaedrus*, the *fons et origo* of the notion (in particular 275A). I have some sympathy with the craftsmen—try learning anything from a computer manual. But little with Plato; and none for the generalised version of the thing—in historical studies at least, written records (however liable to error) are preferable to the stuttering word of mouth. However that may be, I do not find any particular respect for 'the living voice' in Epictetus.

A somewhat different form of the complaint insists that genuine learning comes from within the learner: the book-learner is thus set in contrast not with the apprentice but with the autodidact. 'I searched myself [ἐδίδχησάμην

⁹⁶ In Athenaeus, the learned Myrtilus is universally admired, save by Cynulcus, who rails against his empty polymathy. Myrtilus retorts: 'How right I am to hate all you philosophers who hate scholars [μισοφιλόλογους ὄντας]' (610D). But this is jocular—and Cynulcus has just trumped him on a point of scholarship.

⁹⁷ E.g. Cicero, *ad Att* II xii 2; Galen, *alim fac* VI 480 Kühn (cf *ven sec* XI 194 Kühn); Porphyry, *quaest Hom* 434; Papias, *apud* Eusebius, *HE* III xxxix 4 (cf *HE* V x 4). For Latin *viva vox* see e.g. Seneca, *ep* vi 5-6; Quintilian, II ii 8; Pliny, *ep* II 3; Gellius, XIV ii 1 (with an allusion, I suppose, to Cicero, *leg* III i 2); Irenaeus, *adv haer* III ii 1. See Karpp [1964] (with references to Christian passages); Alexander [1990]; Mansfeld [1994], pp.122-126.

ἐμεωυτόν]’, said Heraclitus—and many mistook him (perhaps intentionally) to be urging first-hand research rather than the taking of nourishment from other men’s spoons.⁹⁸ There are intriguing issues here. But I have not noticed them raised by Epictetus—after all, he earned his crust by plying the spoon.

Different again is the contrast between book-learning and practical experience: it is a poor helmsman who will ‘steer by the book’, ἐκ βιβλίου κυβερνᾶν.⁹⁹ Books may be useful, even for helmsmen; but they must be supplemented—and may be supplanted—by practice or ἄσκησις. It is by playing the piano that we learn to play the piano, as Aristotle put it (*EN* 1103a30-b2)—and he applied the moral to morals. The importance of practice is a theme of Galen’s medical writings;¹⁰⁰ it is a commonplace of Stoic ethics—and it is a constant refrain in Epictetus’ *Discourses*.¹⁰¹ And Epictetus also insists that we become, and remain, pianists by playing the piano, moral heroes by acting heroically.¹⁰²

The philosophers enjoin us not to be satisfied with learning but in addition to train and to practise. For we are long accustomed to doing the contrary of what we should do and to putting to use beliefs contrary to the correct beliefs.

⁹⁸ See B 101 Diels-Kranz; and for the misconstrual e.g. Diogenes Laertius, IX 5; Dio Chrysostom, xxxviii 2.

⁹⁹ See e.g. Galen, *lib prop* XIX 33 Kühn; *temp* XI 797 Kühn; cf *antid* XIV 6 Kühn. See Alexander [1993], p.40 n.39. (The English idiom, ‘do it by the book’, has a different implication.)

¹⁰⁰ E.g. *opt med* I 55-61 Kühn; *an morb* V 15-26 Kühn.

¹⁰¹ E.g. I i 25-32; ii 32; xxv 31; II i 29-31; ix 8-18; xvi 1-23; xviii; III iii 14-19; viii; x 7; xii (with the title ‘Περὶ ἀσκήσεως’); xxiv 84-118; IV i 111-113; frag XVI = Stobaeus, *ecl* III xxix 84: see esp Hijmans [1959]. On ἄσκησις in Musonius note frag 6 = Stobaeus, *ecl* III xxix 78 (from a Περὶ ἀσκήσεως); cf van Geytenbeek [1962], pp.42-49; Laurenti [1989], pp.2113-2120. For Seneca e.g. *ep* xvi 2 (*cotidiana meditatio*); lxxx 2-4; cf Newman [1989]; Hachmann [1995], pp.257-262. For the Old Stoa note e.g. a Περὶ ἀσκήσεως for Herillus (Diogenes Laertius, VII 166), and one for Dionysius (VII 167). The notion is especially associated with the Cynics: Diogenes Laertius, VI 70-71; cf Goulet-Cazé [1986]. – The matter has been much discussed, often in French: see recently Hadot [1995], pp.276-333. Hadot explains that an ‘*exercice spirituel*’ is ‘a practice designed to effect a radical change of being’ (p.271), a change which he describes in terms too deep for me. The exercises may assume a wide variety of forms—a hermit flagellating himself in the desert and a student assiduously taking notes on a course of lectures on Aristotle’s biology may each be indulging in an *exercice spirituel*—; and exercises of this sort are to be discovered throughout Greek philosophy, at least since the time of Socrates. – Well, I cannot deny that ‘radical changes of being’ may be in the wind in a number of ancient philosophical texts. But—or so it seems to me—the notion of intellectual ἄσκησις, of ‘mental gymnastics’, is at bottom a pretty down-to-earth sort of thing; and in most ancient texts ἄσκησις aims at nothing so high-falutin’ as a change of being. After all, the idea of training or practice is hardly esoteric or religious (or even remarkable): it is a piece of ordinary, robust, common sense that if you want to ride a bike, then you should get pedalling—and that if you want to master logic, then you should do the exercises at the end of the Chapter.

¹⁰² See II ix 10-12; xviii 1-7.

Hence if we do not put the right beliefs to use, we shall be nothing but interpreters of other men's doctrines. (II ix 13-14)

'You read books—you do not listen to the masters'. 'You read books—you do not learn for yourself'. 'You read books—you do not seek practical experience'. But the specific form of the complaint which concerns me here is different again. For Epictetus, in his remarks on exegesis, is concerned with book-learning in the sense of learning about books. He is worried that we are too intent on 'metascience', too interested in learning what others have learned. And although I have nothing against exegesis myself—after all, that is largely how I earn my own crust—it is difficult not to feel a twinge of sympathy.

Yet Epictetus can scarcely have been astonished by the state of affairs which he lamented; for the educational system, in which he himself was—so far as we can tell—a reasonably orthodox participant, might have been designed to produce little interpreters.¹⁰³ A carpenter does not say 'Come and hear me talking about carpentry'—he builds a house and demonstrates his art (II xxi 4). But what does a teacher of philosophy do? He cries

'Come and listen to me giving my little commentaries [σχόλια] ... I'll explain Chrysippus to you like nobody else, I'll give you the purest account of what he says—and perhaps I'll add a dash of Antipater and Archedemus.' (§§ 6-7)

A teacher of philosophy would give his students a text to read—usually, if he were a Stoic philosopher, a classical text by one of the Old Stoics. The students would first read it by themselves (I iv 9). In school they would read it to the master (I x 8). The master would then 'explain' it; that is to say, he would offer an *explication de texte* or commentary¹⁰⁴—or the pupils might 'explain' it to the master (I iv 15-16).¹⁰⁵

Fronto offers us a vignette of the practice—which happens to concern schooling in Stoic logic:

So you read a book to a philosopher. You listen in silence while the master explains it. You nod that you've understood. The others read—and as for you, you usually doze off. You hear 'What is P? what Q? [τί τὸ πρῶτον; τί τὸ

¹⁰³ On school practice see e.g. Plutarch, *aud rat*—and Bruns [1897]; Hijmans [1959], pp.41-48; Clarke [1971], pp.55-108; Goulet-Cazé [1982]; Mansfeld [1994], pp.193-194; Lakmann [1995], pp.216-220.

¹⁰⁴ Cf e.g. I iv 15; vi 11; 19; II xvii 13-19; xxi 10-11; III xxi 8; *ench* 49. Note that there is no question in any of these passages of written commentaries: it is always a matter of oral commentary—or rather, and less ponderously, the 'exegesis' to which Epictetus so frequently refers is simply a schoolmaster's taking his boys through a tricky text. (For the distinction between written and oral commentary see Galen, in *Hipp fract* XVIII B 321 Kühn.)

¹⁰⁵ Perhaps in a sort of oral examination? See the later and stylized version of such a thing in Porphyry's catechistic commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*.

δεύτερον;]’ again and again. The windows are wide open, and someone hammers out ‘If it is day, it is light [εἰ ἡμέρα ἔστι, φῶς ἔστιν]’. And then off you go without a care in the world. (*eloq* v 4 [p.151 van den Hout²])¹⁰⁶

Fronto is witty and wicked; but there is no reason to doubt that his description is, *au fond*, true to the facts.

The exegetical practice was not peculiar to the Stoic schools. The Peripatetics went in for it,¹⁰⁷ and so did the Platonists.¹⁰⁸ And it was followed in schools of rhetoric¹⁰⁹ and of grammar¹¹⁰ as well as in schools of philosophy. Moreover, what happened in the schoolroom happened also in serious symposia, which would begin with the reading of a text and continue with an informal ‘commentary’.¹¹¹ And it happened when philosophers met to discuss philosophy.¹¹² Thus when Thaumasius attended a discussion *chez* Plotinus, he was surprised—and not a little vexed—to find that he was not regaled by an *explication de texte*.¹¹³

In short, philosophy in the imperial period was, in principle and primarily, a matter of exegesis, of explication, of commentary. The thesis is widely acknowledged;¹¹⁴ and it is, I think, indisputably true. But the truth demands a couple of glosses which, taken together, make it somewhat less excitingly true than certain scholars seem inclined to imagine.

The first gloss concerns the notion of exegesis; for the word ‘exegesis’ is generous and covers a range of distinguishable practices. At one end of the range come formal commentaries on classical texts—Aspasius’ commentary on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, which probably dates from around the end of the first century A.D., is perhaps the earliest surviving example of this honourable genre. Then there are partial or selective commentaries—thus Galen wrote a sequence of comments on the medical passages in Plato’s *Timaeus*. Or again, an exegete might discuss a problem raised by a classical text rather than a portion of a classical text—

¹⁰⁶ Cf Lucian, *Hermot* 82 [827-828].

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Galen, *lib prop* XIX 42 Kühn (a pupil reads Aristotle’s *Cat* with a teacher).

¹⁰⁸ E.g. in the school of Taurus: Gellius, XVII xx; XIX vi.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Gellius, I iv 8.

¹¹⁰ The practice of reading followed by commentary would already have been familiar to philosophy students from their days in the grammar school: on the method of *praelectio* see e.g. Quintilian, I viii 13-17, II v 4, and the sample in Priscian, *partit* [GL III 459-515]—a schoolmaster’s lesson on verses from the *Aeneid*. – On a higher level see e.g. Gellius, I xxi 4 (Gellius reads Hyginus’ commentary on Virgil to Favorinus).

¹¹¹ See e.g. Gellius, II xxii; III xix.

¹¹² See e.g. Plutarch, *adv Col* 1107F; Porphyry, *vit Plot* 14, 18.

¹¹³ Porphyry, *vit Plot* 13; see Goulet-Cazé [1982], pp.268-269; Lim [1993].

¹¹⁴ For some discussion see e.g. Schrekenberg [1966]; Hadot [1987]; Donini [1992]; Dörrie and Baltes [*1993], pp.162-171; Barnes [1993c]; Mansfeld [1994]; Donini [1994], [1996]; Sedley [1997]. – Note that there were serious reflexions on the nature and aims of a commentary: e.g. Galen, in *Hipp fract* XVIII 318-323 Kühn (which is an epitome of Galen’s lost monograph Περὶ ἐξηγήσεως); see e.g. Erler [1991]; Barnes [1992].

Alexander's *Quaestiones* provide an illustrative instance. And, at the other end of the range, a philosopher in tackling some philosophical issue might take a classical exposition as his starting point or a classical text as his foil and reference; or, in the course of investigating a philosophical issue, he might offer comments and glosses upon pertinent passages in such classical texts—in these ways much of Plotinus is exegetical. The notion of exegesis is elastic: only if it is stretched, and stretched pretty taut, is it true to say that imperial philosophy was primarily exegetical.

In the case of the Peripatetics, much philosophizing was indeed done in the guise of formal commentary on Aristotelian texts:¹¹⁵ thus a great part of Alexander's *œuvre* consists of line by line commentaries. But Alexander also wrote numerous exegetical works which are not in the form of commentaries (and his commentaries themselves sometimes allow place to substantial essays). In the case of the Platonists, we hear of fewer formal commentaries (and none has survived in its entirety);¹¹⁶ but it is clear that behind most Platonist texts there lies a Platonic passage or a Platonic doctrine—and its interpretation. In the other two schools of the period formal commentaries appear to have been a rarity: among the Epicureans, the scholarly, philological exegesis of classical texts had long been an established practice,¹¹⁷ and there is no reason to suppose that it ceased; but I do not know of any reference to a formal commentary on an Epicurean text. For the Stoics, too, there is little evidence for written commentaries—although here, too, it is clear that there was much exegesis.¹¹⁸ Perhaps this paucity of information is merely a matter of chance—after all, most ancient commentaries (like most ancient texts) are lost; and most of them, we must surely imagine, are lost without trace.¹¹⁹ Or perhaps the Stoics—and the Epicureans—did not in fact go in for formal commentaries?¹²⁰ Whatever the truth of this matter may be, it is clear—from the words of Seneca and of Epictetus—that Stoic philosophizing was thoroughly exegetical in spirit; and it seems to me entirely reasonable to imagine that the same was true of the imperial Epicureans.

¹¹⁵ See Barnes *et al* [*1991], pp.4-14.

¹¹⁶ For the evidence see Dörrie and Baltes [*1993], pp.171-226; on the rules for Platonic exegesis see Diogenes Laertius, III 65. – The anonymous commentary on the *Theaetetus*, the first pages of which are preserved on papyrus, has been re-edited by Sedley [*1995].

¹¹⁷ See the fragments of Demetrius of Laconia in Puglia [*1988]; cf e.g. Sedley [1989]; Roselli [1989]; Erler [1993].

¹¹⁸ See below, p.73.

¹¹⁹ Lucian wrote a spoof set of Heraclitean texts. He submitted it to a learned scholar—who duly wrote a commentary on it. The text and commentary, alas, are lost (but I suspect that fragments are to be found in Diels-Kranz). We know of the episode because it was alluded to by Galen in his commentary on Hippocrates' *Epidemics*, the pertinent part of which survives only in an Arabic translation: see Strohmaier [1976].

¹²⁰ In which case we might wonder why: for some speculations see Donini [1994], pp.5089-5093.

Imperial philosophy, whatever school it was taught in, was—primarily and for the most part—exegetical in its approach to the subject. But it was exegetical in a broad and relaxed sense of the word.

The second gloss is this: philosophical exegesis was no imperial novelty.¹²¹ In the first century B.C. we hear of Crassus reading the *Gorgias* with his Academic master Charmadas;¹²² and we hear of Epicureans, at about the same time, reading Anaxagoras and Empedocles.¹²³ But there is no need to hunt down *recherché* examples. Philosophers, after all, had always been exegetes, and textual interpretation, in one form or another, had always been a serious mode of philosophizing. The first part of Plato's *Parmenides* provides an early and a classic case. Or recall Aristotle's critical reflections on his predecessors in the first book of the *Metaphysics*; or—in more elaborate form—the critical analyses which the *Politics* devotes to themes from the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Or think of Theophrastus' 'doxographical' works, which were both expository and critical. And if the early Peripatos produced many things of this sort, it was not foreign to the early Stoa either: Persaeus wrote on Plato's *Laws* (Diogenes Laertius, VII 36); Aristo wrote on Zeno and on Cleanthes—and on Alexinus (VII 163); Cleanthes wrote on Zeno and on Herillus, and also on Democritus—and four books entitled *Explications of Heraclitus*, Ἡρακλείτου ἐξηγήσεις (VII 175); Sphaerus wrote on Heraclitus, and on the Eretrians (VII 178).¹²⁴

And so it has always been. After all, the major part of most contemporary books and articles on philosophy is devoted to a discussion of X's views about Y's thoughts on the subject of Z.

Was there anything new, in this respect, in the imperial period? The growlings of Seneca and Epictetus insinuate that the exegetical turn was an

¹²¹ Nor, of course, was it a pagan prerogative—it was also a familiar part of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. An interesting Jewish example is supplied by Aristobulus, a Jewish Peripatetic who wrote a commentary on the laws of Moses and dedicated it to two of the Ptolemies (Anatolius, *apud* Eusebius, *HE* VII xxxii 16: see Goulet [1989c])—on Jewish philosophical commentary see e.g. Goulet [1987]; Mansfeld [1988]. As for the Christians, recall that after Peregrinus had imbibed ἡ θαυμαστὴ σοφία τῶν Χριστιανῶν, he became the complete prophet and priest—'as for books, some he explained and elucidated [ἐξηγεῖτο καὶ διεσάφει] and many he wrote himself' (Lucian, *Peregr* 11). On Christian commentaries with a philosophical bent see e.g. Schäublin [1974]; Osborn [1987]; Neuschäfer [1987]; Gamble [1995], pp. 21–28; Simonetti [1996].

¹²² Cicero, *de orat* I xi 47.

¹²³ Philodemus, Πρὸς τοὺς frag 116 Angeli; cf Sextus, *M* X 19 (on Epicurus' schooldays).

¹²⁴ For later Stoic commentaries note e.g. Boethus on Aratus (Geminus, xvii 48); Posidonius 'explained the *Timaeus*' (Sextus, *M* VII 93) even if he did not write a commentary on the work (see Kidd [*1988], II pp. 337–343), and he also had something to say on the *Phaedrus* (Hermias, *in Phdr* 114) and on the *Parmenides* (Proclus, *in Parm* VI 25); Panaetius, φιλοπλάτων καὶ φιλαριστοτέλης (*ind stoic* lxi 2–3 Dorandi), had scholarly interests which will surely have involved some Platonic exegesis.

unhealthy and recent phenomenon. But I incline to doubt it. At most, we may speak of a change of emphasis, of a growing interest in exegetical matters, or of an increased tendency to give philosophizing a textual basis. Such changes and developments are, at the best of times, difficult to document. Given the state of our evidence, it would be rash to insist that they mark and characterize the imperial period.¹²⁵

However that may be, if exegesis is such a pillar of philosophy, why shake it? What is wrong with exegesis? In practice, no doubt, much. Great fleas have lesser fleas; and whether or not the articles in today's journals advance the careers of their authors (which, to be sure, is their primary reason for existence), they assuredly do not advance the subject. But other and grander objections have been raised. In particular, modern scholars sometimes suggest that exegesis is the enemy of originality, that a philosophy based on commentary must be dull and conservative and tralaticious.

Now in some ancient quarters the exegetical habit was accompanied by a self-conscious and principled disavowal of originality:

These theories are not new, nor do they date from today: they were expounded long ago, in a cryptic fashion; and the theories of today are interpretations of them, showing these doctrines to be old by the testimony of Plato's own writings. (Plotinus, *enn* V i 8, 10-14)

Plotinus is—or pretends that he is—nothing more than an interpreter of Plato.¹²⁶ Why? The pretence is based on a bizarre idea. When we are puzzled by a philosophical problem,

we think it enough if, when questioned, we can say what the men of old thought, content to avoid any further inquiry. For we must think that some of the old and blessed philosophers have found the truth—and it is our task to consider which of them were particularly successful and how we may gain an understanding about the matter. (*enn* III vii 1, 10-16)

¹²⁵ Hadot [1995] speaks of a 'radical distinction' between the method of philosophical teaching in vogue in the imperial period (commentary on texts) and the pre-imperial method (dialectical discussion of problems): p.165. He appeals to Alexander, in *Top* 27.13; but Alexander is not reporting pre-imperial practice: he is invoking, hazily enough, the Good Old Days of Plato and Aristotle, when there were as yet no books to be the object of commentaries. In fact, Hadot himself acknowledges that 'the literary genre of the philosophical commentary is very old' (p.232); and the 'radical change', which is now dated to the first century B.C., consists in the fact that thenceforth 'the very teaching of philosophy essentially took the form of textual commentary'. The radical change was not so radical after all.

¹²⁶ See also Longinus, *apud* Porphyry, *vii Plot* 20.

The truth has already been found and expressed: we need only discover the ancient volumes, dust them down, and read the hidden truth.

Plotinus' view of the history of philosophy is absurd. (It is so absurd that it is tempting to doubt his sincerity. Perhaps it was a pose? or a deliberately grotesque exaggeration? Yet there is no view so daft that some philosopher has not adopted it.) However that may be, what of Plotinus' disavowal of originality? and what of the general idea that exegesis is the enemy of originality? Here is an argument in its favour: an exegete will, in principle, produce sentences of the form 'x said that P'; such a sentence will be a good piece of exegesis if and only if x in fact said that P; hence if the exegete, in invoking the sentence 'P', offers something novel to the world, his exegesis is bad. It does not follow that exegesis is the enemy of originality. It does follow that good exegesis is incompatible with originality.

But this argument is a mere pedantry: in principle, its conclusion is inescapable; in the rough and tumble of practice, it has no value at all. For no exegete, good or bad, limits himself to sentences of the form 'x said that P'. And even if the sentences of the form 'x said that P' cannot, in a good exegesis, convey original thoughts, all the other sentences in the exegetical work may perfectly well do so.

In truth, the idea that exegesis and originality are at odds is false—evidently and outrageously false. Exegesis may be adventurous stuff; that is to say, what is passed off by its author as humble exegesis may strike a reader as bold and original thought, and what its author genuinely takes to be humble exegesis may in truth be bold and original thought. What, after all, is more original than the philosophy of Plotinus, which professes to be no more than an exegesis of ancient truths and which is in fact solidly founded on a serious study of Platonic literature?¹²⁷ No doubt bold exegesis is usually bad exegesis; and I suppose that, as a general rule, the more originality a piece of exegesis displays, the further it is from the truth. Moreover, if you start out from the Plotinian thesis that the truth is to be found in Plato's texts, then your chances of producing a dispassionate and rigorously scholarly interpretation are not very high.¹²⁸ Certainly, many of the things which Plotinus claims to be Platonic are not Platonic at all.

It is sometimes maintained that such worries about originality have nothing to do with antiquity; that, on the contrary, an ancient author was more likely to lament than to applaud originality. 'O, the novelty of it'—the expostulation was critical, not adulatory. 'Innovating'—καινοτομεῖν, νεωτερίζειν—was generally regarded as a bad thing, the intellectual

¹²⁷ Or what more original than Clement's interpretation of the decalogue (*strom* VI xvi: see Osborn [1987], pp.181-182)? Or than Michael Dummett's interpretation of Frege?

¹²⁸ 'Protected by an authoritative text, the interpreter displays a freedom which amazes and may alienate' (Erler [1993], p.294).

counterpart to treason or to bloody revolution.¹²⁹ Perhaps this is true. But it is a one-sided truth. For if originality or καινοτομία was a crime, so too was plagiarism—λογοκλοπία or, more simply, κλοπή.¹³⁰ Seneca, snapping up an Epicurean trifle, might blithely proclaim that ‘what is true is mine [*quod verum est meum est*]’ (*ep* xii 11); but his proclamation was evidently intended to shock. Plotinus, who formally abjured originality, was accused of plagiarizing Numenius: Amelius and Porphyry, far from welcoming the charge, rose swiftly to rebut it (Porphyry, *vit Plot* 17-18)—and Porphyry himself wrote a piece on the vice of plagiarism.¹³¹ Indeed, there was no commoner charge against a literary man than the charge of κλοπή. And no commoner boast than the boast of originality—‘the passion for novel thoughts, that is the chief craze of the day’.¹³² The day of the author of *On the Sublime* fell probably in the first century A.D. The craze was permanent.

Καινοτομία—λογοκλοπία. ‘You are innovating’—‘You are stealing’. The fact that both accusations could be brought need neither upset nor amaze—every author is a Mr.Have-it-both-ways, dyed in the wool of tradition and also as original as sin; and every competent critic will fire his arrows in both directions. But the prevalence of both accusations does, I think, suggest that we should take neither of them too seriously. To be sure, originality was generally despised. To be sure, originality was generally prized.

However that may be, Epictetus’ objections to exegetes have nothing to do with matters of originality. He complained, first, that philosophers made exegesis their intellectual goal: they were content to learn that x said that P; they did not care to know whether P or not-P. (Contrast Plotinus, for whom exegesis is the shortest—perhaps the sole—path to the truth about things. For if we can determine that x said that P, then we have thereby determined that P—provided, that is, that x is Plato.) And Epictetus complained, secondly, that his little exegetes did not dream of applying their philosophy to their lives: content to recognize that x said that P, it never occurred to them that they might conform their actions to the belief that P. The two complaints are linked; for insofar as I content myself with the thought that, according to Chrysippus, you should always declare the defects of any

¹²⁹ See Sedley [1989]; Erler [1993], pp.296-303; on Greek attitudes to originality more generally see e.g. Lloyd [1987], pp.50-108. – It is sometimes suggested that the veneration for authority and the rejection of καινοτομία was an imperial phenomenon: even if the exegetical practice itself was age-old, there was something new in the imperial period—the conviction that the old texts contained the truth. But, as Erler [1993] demonstrates, this conviction can be traced back at least to the second century B.C.

¹³⁰ See Stemplinger [1912]; Ziegler [1950].

¹³¹ frags 408-410 Smith = Eusebius, *PE* X iii 1-26.

¹³² τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις καινόςπουδον περὶ ὃ δὴ μάλιστα κορυβαντιῶσιν οἱ νῦν: [Longinus], v.

article which you are trying to sell, I shall have no reason at all to tell you, a prospective purchaser, that my desirable residence is soft with dry rot. The exegetical prefix, ‘Chrysippus said that ...’, happily insulates me from any practical implications which the unprefixing doctrine might uncomfortably have suggested.

I shall not inquire into the merits of Epictetus’ complaints—in truth, we can hardly hope to tell how far he was playing the honest reporter, how far the rhetorical grouse. But it is worth saying that, within their context, the complaints are intelligible—the more so, of course, to anyone who holds that philosophy is indeed the *ars vitae*. And it is worth adding that—unlike many of the jeremiads which we read in the *Discourses*—the complaints were not commonplaces: it was, to be sure, a commonplace to claim that philosophers did not live by their philosophies; but it was no commonplace to claim that exegesis was a dangerous occupation—on the contrary, Epictetus’ claim implicitly challenged the orthodox philosophical practice of his age.

§ E: For logic

Exegesis and Epictetus’ reflections upon it bear on imperial philosophy as a whole: I return to the specific case of logic, and to the texts in which Epictetus appears to exhibit a hostility to the subject. What is the import of these texts? what practical conclusion did Epictetus rest on his doleful reflections? Some passages do indeed suggest an outright rejection of logic. ‘Let others practise lawsuits, others problems, others syllogisms: you must practise how to die, to be imprisoned, to be tortured, to be exiled’ (II i 38). ‘Problems’ here designates physics, and I suspect that ‘lawsuits’ stands in for rhetoric;¹³³ certainly, ‘syllogisms’ means logic: thus Epictetus appears to announce that logic is no business of a philosopher. Or again, if you think yourself educated because ‘you have dealt with syllogisms and changing arguments’, then ‘you must unlearn all this if you can and begin from the beginning, aware that up to now you have not even touched on the matter’ (II xvii 27). Or again:

O the injustice of the educated!¹³⁴ Is that what you learned here? Why won’t you leave the little arguments [λογάρια]¹³⁵ about these matters to others, to

¹³³ On rhetoric see below, p.58.

¹³⁴ I.e. the educated act unjustly in not doing with their education what they should—not ‘they are treated unjustly’ (Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.342).

¹³⁵ On λογάρια (which are not ‘fine words’, *pace* Souilhé, Laurenti) see also II xviii 26 (‘all you know are λογάρια’: cf. II x 29-30; xviii 26; xix 22; III xxiv 78-81). The diminutive form ‘λογάριον’ is thoroughly in Epictetus’ style—compare, say, his penchant for

wretched little men who will sit in a corner¹³⁶ and rake in their little fees—or grumble because no-one offers them anything? Why won't you come forward and use what you have learned? What is wanted now is not little arguments—the books of the Stoics are loaded with little arguments. Then what is wanted? Someone who will use them, who will bear witness to his words in his actions. (I xxix 54-56)

Socrates, whose life is a paradigm for us in all things¹³⁷ and who is the chief hero of the *Discourses*, did not want to improve his language and his logic, his λεξείδια and his θεωρημάτια:

if someone asked him for λεξείδια or θεωρημάτια, he sent them to Protagoras or to Hippias. If someone had come to ask him for vegetables, he would have sent them to a greengrocer. (III v 17)

Such passages—and others could be assembled—appear to offer handsome support to what I have called the hornless version of the common view of imperial logic: surely Epictetus, who urges his pupils to avoid syllogisms and the lawcourts, to fly Venus and phlebotomy, had no time for logic himself?

These texts should not be brushed aside as casual grumblings, nor yet discounted as morsels of rhetorical exaggeration. But in point of fact they offer no support at all to the common view. It is true that II i 38 and II xvii 27, taken out of context, may appear to be general prohibitions on logical study. But, read in their context, they serve a different, and a less universal, end: like many other apparently general exhortations in the *Discourses*, they are in fact directed against particular individuals—or rather against particular types of individual. Thus in II i Epictetus is speaking in particular of young men, fresh from school, who fancy themselves as bellettrists. Such young men love to boast 'See how I can compose dialogues': they are wrong—rather, their boast should be 'See how I can govern my desires and my passions' (§ 35). 'Let others practise lawsuits ...': Epictetus does not mean, quite generally, that rhetoric, physics, and logic are subjects inappropriate to a philosopher: he means, specifically, that young

'σώματιον', 'κτησίδιον', 'ψυχάριον', and the like; but it is also the traditional word in this context: see e.g. Marcus, I vii 2 (cited above, p.1). τὰ ἐκ τῆς ποικίλης στοᾶς λογαρία are found already in the comic poet Theognetus (*apud* Athenaeus, 104B); and they are still found in Themistius, *orat* xxxii 358D. Cicero puts the word into Latin as '*ratiuncula*' (*Tusc* II xii 29, above, p.15; *IV* xix 43; cf *nat deorum* III xxix 73) or '*interrogatiuncula*' (*fin* IV iii 7).

¹³⁶ Epictetus alludes to Plato, *Gorg* 485D (see Dodds *ad loc*); for Epictetus' frequent references and allusions to Plato see Schenkl [*1916], pp.XCII-XCIV. (And see below, n.186.)

¹³⁷ *IV* v 2: there are more than 50 references to Socrates in the *Discourses*, all of them laudatory—more than twice as many as there are to Diogenes the Cynic.

philosophy students should first get their desires in order and learn to live 'in accordance with nature'—lawsuits and the like may come later.

Again, in II xvii Epictetus is aiming his darts at the single-minded logician, at the man who takes himself to be educated simply because he has mastered syllogistic. If that is your case, then your best plan is to unlearn everything and begin afresh. There is no suggestion in the text that logic in general should be abandoned, or that no-one should ever study the subject.

And so it is, I think, with Epictetus' other tirades against the study of logic: they touch not the subject but its foolish or foppish practitioners. The pertinent distinction is made quite clearly by Epictetus himself. 'If you hear someone singing badly, you don't say 'Look how musicians sing!'—rather, you say 'He's no musician'—and so it is with philosophy' (IV viii 8-9).¹³⁸ And one text explicitly applies the distinction to logic:

If you ask me now 'Are syllogisms useful?', I will say that they are—and if you like I will prove how [ἀποδείξω πῶς].—'So what use have they been to me?'—My friend, you didn't ask if they were useful to you but if they were useful in general. Suppose that someone with dysentery asks me if vinegar is useful: I'll say that it is.—'Useful to me?'—No: first stop the discharge and let the sores heal.¹³⁹ (II xxi 21-22)

Syllogisms are no use to the foolish. It does not follow that they are no use at all. And Epictetus insists that they are in fact useful—and that he can prove it.

Even in his own time Epictetus was misunderstood on this point. He observes that you may speak like Demosthenes and still be unfortunate, that you may analyse syllogisms like Chrysippus and still be wretched.

When I say these things to some people, they think that I am running down a concern for speaking or for theorems. But it is not this that I am running down, but rather the habit of being endlessly concerned with them and placing your hopes in them. (II xxiii 46)

Logic (the concern for theorems¹⁴⁰) and rhetoric (the concern for speaking) are in themselves good things, things worth studying. But they must be

¹³⁸ Compare the brief text preserved as PSI II 152 (see Concolino Mancini [1980]). I hesitate to suggest that the papyrus contains a fragment from the lost part of the *Discourses*.

¹³⁹ For medical analogies of this sort see I xxvi 15; II xiv 21-22; xviii 8-11; III xxi 15-22; xxii 73; xxiii 30-31 ('A philosopher's school is a surgery [ἰατρεῖον]'); frag XIX = Stobaeus, *ecI* III iv 93. They are, of course, the most common of commonplaces: Pollux, *onom* IV 39. See e.g. Voelke [1993].

¹⁴⁰ Which are not 'scientific theorems' (Souilhé), as the context shows.

studied appropriately—at the right time, in the right spirit, for the right ends.

Logic is elsewhere conjoined with rhetoric: both were temptations, and both seduced the young. Just as Epictetus is usually taken to be an enemy of logic, so he is usually taken to be an enemy of rhetoric. But he was no more against rhetoric than he was against logic.¹⁴¹ II xxiii speaks of rhetoric in general terms; and Epictetus claims that rhetorical competence, ἡ φραστικὴ δύναμις, is not a thing of vast importance. But he does not deny it all value: your ears are not of vast importance, nor are your shoes—but it would be absurd to conclude that they had no value at all. III xxiii discusses display speeches; and Epictetus vigorously bludgeons those philosophy lecturers who preen themselves on their linguistic refinement and draw flattering crowds to their speechifyings. They confuse philosophy with epideictic rhetoric. Epictetus himself has little time for stylistic exercises, and he is sure that they are not at all the same thing as philosophical exercises; but he does not invite us to infer that epideictic oratory has no value at all—nor even that philosophers should not care how they write or speak.

I viii is concerned with rhetorical arguments (§ 7: ἡ ἐπιχειρητικὴ καὶ πιθανολογικὴ δύναμις), and specifically with enthymemes (§§ 1-3).¹⁴² I paraphrase the conversation: 'Philosophers, who deal with syllogisms, are surely competent to deal with enthymemes too?—Then why don't *we* train in them?—You must first get your morals right: rhetoric would only distract you and puff you up with false pride.—But *Plato* was surely a stylist.—Yes, but he was not a stylist *qua* philosopher, any more than Hippocrates' style belongs to him *qua* doctor. After all, because I am lame you don't think that you must become lame in order to be a philosopher.' That is to say, style is not an essential or a primary attribute of a philosopher: nonetheless, it may properly adorn the writings of a polished thinker.

Rhetoric is often abused, and so is logic. But this must be blamed on the abusers, not on the abused. In II xxiii Epictetus insists that he does not disparage the subject of logic. There is no reason to doubt that he is speaking honestly—here at least there is no tinge of irony in his words.

¹⁴¹ See also Musonius, frag 4 [p.19.8-14 Hense] = Stobaeus, *ecI* II xxxi 123. On Epictetus and rhetoric see e.g. Brancacci [1985], pp.28-32; Brunt [1994], p.42.

¹⁴² On enthymemes, here characterized as 'incomplete syllogisms [ἀτελής συλλογισμός]', see Burnyeat [1994], who discovers the Stoic origins of this (unAristotelian) notion of an enthymeme.

At II xxvi 21 Epictetus offers to prove that syllogisms are useful: at II xxv he provides a proof not merely that syllogisms are useful but that ‘logic is necessary’.¹⁴³ I cite the piece in full:

One of the people present said: ‘Persuade me that logic is useful.’—‘Do you want me to prove it to you?’ he asked.—‘Yes.’—‘So I must produce a probative argument?’—He agreed.—‘Then how will you know if I produce a sophism?’—He said nothing.—‘You see,’ he said, ‘you yourself agree that all this¹⁴⁴ is necessary, since without it you cannot even learn whether it is necessary or not.’

The model for this pretty little thing is a celebrated argument which was published in Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*: ‘Either you should study philosophy or you should not study philosophy; but if you ought not to study philosophy, then—in order to determine that you ought not to study it—you must study it: hence you ought to study philosophy’.¹⁴⁵ Although Epictetus’ argument is closely related to a certain type of self-refuting argument or *περιτροπή*,¹⁴⁶ I do not recall having seen anything quite like it in an earlier Stoic text.

It reads, no doubt, like a sophism. The point of Epictetus’ initial remarks is to show that something like the following thesis must be accepted:

In order to know whether or not it is necessary to study logic, it is necessary to study logic.

Since Epictetus’ interlocutor wants to know whether or not it is necessary to study logic, he must admit that it is necessary to study logic. One way of representing Epictetus’ reasoning is this:

In order to know whether or not it is necessary to study logic, it is necessary to study logic.

But you ought to know whether or not it is necessary to study logic.

Therefore: you ought to study logic.

The general form of the argument is this:

¹⁴³ Under the title ‘*πὼς ἀναγκαῖα τὰ λογικά*’; compare the title of I xvii (ὅτι ἀναγκαῖα τὰ λογικά). For the titles of individual discourses see Schenkl [*1916], pp.LXXXVIII-LXXXII.

¹⁴⁴ ταῦτα are τὰ λογικά of the title.

¹⁴⁵ See Alexander, *in Top* 149.9-17—other texts are collected in Düring [*1961], pp.44, 113-114. On the fortune of the argument see most recently, O’Meara [1994].

¹⁴⁶ See above, pp.30-31.

Necessarily (if P, then Q).

It ought to be the case that P.

Therefore: it ought to be the case that Q.¹⁴⁷

And it is a nice question whether such a form is valid or not.

No doubt the considerations which Epictetus advances in favour of the first premiss of the argument are frail. You might, for example, think it pertinent to inquire whether all or most trained logicians are rich and happy rather than poor and miserable; and you might think that you can determine the truth about this without worrying over the possibility of sophistry and delusion. In addition, you might find something paradoxical—even self-defeating—in Epictetus' argument; for how, if I do not yet know any logic, can I be sure that my logic teacher is not offering me sophistries and delusions? But whether or not the argument is ultimately any good, its presence in the *Discourses* is striking and instructive.

Moreover, there are more important—and more Epictetan—texts than II xxv. In several passages Epictetus states clearly and positively that we *ought* to study logic. After all, our reasoning faculty, ἡ λογικὴ δύναμις, is 'the best of all things and master'; and it alone has Zeus placed within our power (I i 7). It is master because, alone of the faculties and arts, it 'contemplates both itself and everything else' (§ 4)—if it did not contemplate itself, then there would be an infinite regression of contemplators (I xvii 1-3).¹⁴⁸ Plainly, then, we should devote ourselves to its study: Chrysippus and Cleanthes and Zeno, the scholarchs of the Old Stoa, did so—and so too did Diogenes' teacher Antisthenes, and Socrates.¹⁴⁹ The appeal to Diogenes (by way of Antisthenes) and to Socrates is not casual: if Epictetus' two paradigms of human perfection engaged in logical study, then how can we abjure it? (Chrysippus himself had defended the study of dialectic against its detractors by invoking the precedent of the Academy and the Lyceum—and in particular of Socrates.¹⁵⁰)

It might be objected that these programmatic passages in I i and I xvii do not refer specifically to logic: rather, they refer in general to the reasoning faculty, and if Epictetus has anything specific in mind then it is surely the role of reason as the employer of impressions (see I i 5). The message of I i, in brief, is not 'Study logic', but 'Use your reason'.

¹⁴⁷ For 'P' substitute 'You know whether or not it is necessary to study logic'; for 'Q' 'You study logic'.

¹⁴⁸ See I xvii 1-3; xx 1-6; II xxiii 5-13.

¹⁴⁹ I xvii 12: for Socrates, see above, n.137; there are another four references to Antisthenes in the *Discourses*.

¹⁵⁰ See Plutarch, *stoic repugn* 1045E-1046A.

Now it is true that, in Epictetus' view, the correct use of impressions, ἡ ὀρθὴ χρῆσις τῶν φαντασιῶν, is the primary task of reason; indeed, in a certain sense it is the only task of reason and the only task for men.¹⁵¹ But there is no real contrast between the study of logic and the rational use of impressions: in I xvii it is plain that Epictetus is thinking primarily of Stoic logic; and the close parallel between I xvii and I i makes it certain that the study of logic is at any rate encompassed by the general notion of the rational use of impressions.

The decisive text is I vii.¹⁵² The formal aim of the discourse is to show that, contrary to the opinion of most men, the study of certain apparently esoteric parts of logic—of hypothetical arguments, of changing arguments—is useful. In fact, Epictetus' conclusion is more general and more substantial than this formal aim suggests: he concludes that we ought to study logic. It may be worth giving a summary of the whole discourse:

The study of changing arguments and the like is in point of fact concerned with what is appropriate. For in every area we need to know how a good man can discover the appropriate way to behave. (§§ 1-2) Hence unless you suppose that a good man will never engage in argument or will not care how he behaves in argument, you must allow that logic should be studied. (§ 3-4)

Now the point of logic is to enable us to grasp the true, reject the false, and suspend judgement on the unclear. But it is not enough simply to do this: you must be able to test arguments and statements so that you can ensure your success—you need a faculty or skill: getting things right by luck is not enough. (§§ 5-8) Since logic is not only concerned with grasping the truth but also with accepting what follows from what you have already accepted, you must further learn under what conditions one thing follows from another—hence the necessity for logical study and logical practice. (§§ 9-12)

Changing arguments offer a peculiar difficulty; for with them it seems that you can start from true premisses and proceed by valid methods to a false conclusion. Hence it is important to survey the varieties and to grasp the nature of such arguments. (§§ 13-21) There are also special difficulties with hypothetical arguments—what hypotheses should you accept, and what attitude should you adopt to the consequences of those hypotheses which you have accepted? (§§ 22-29)

¹⁵¹ See e.g. I iv 4; xii 34; xx 5, 15; xxx 4; II i 4; xix 32; xxii 29; xxiii 42; III i 25; iii 1; xvi 15; xxii 21; xxiv 69; IV iv 28; v 23; vi 25, 34; x 13, 26; *ench* 6; frag IV = Stobaeus, *ecl* II viii 30; frag VIII = Stobaeus, *ecl* IV xlv 60. – Animals, too, use their impressions; and strictly speaking what marks off men is not the use of impressions but the self-conscious use of them (the fact that men 'follow', παρακολουθεῖν, their impressions): I vi 12-21; II viii 4-8; cf II vi 14; IV vii 7, 32. When Epictetus speaks simply of use, we should no doubt take him to mean self-conscious use.

¹⁵² Full text and translation in the Appendix.

Idleness is always with us; but it is no good saying, after a mistake in logic, that 'it is not as though I have killed my father or burned down the Capitol'. As Musonius once said to me: an error in logic is an error—we must therefore work energetically in logic, as in any other matter, in order to do what it is appropriate to do. (§§ 30-33)

Logic has turned out to be necessary: 'And has there not arisen among us study and training in valid arguments and schemata, and has it not proved necessary?' (§ 12). Our conception of the Sage is such that he must be a logician: 'Will he be able to preserve coherence without some training and preparation of this sort?' (§ 29). And so we too must train in logic: 'Why are we still lazy and idle and dull? why do we look for excuses for not working—or even staying awake—and developing our reason?' (§ 31). 'Using your own impressions at random and in vain and at haphazard, not following an argument or a proof or a sophism, in general not seeing, in questioning and answering, what accords with your position and what does not—is none of this a mistake?' (§ 33).

Logic is morally required, it is morally indispensable. We are essentially rational beings. Our nature thus requires us to develop and to exercise our rational capacities. We cannot shirk logical argument or refuse to engage in logical debate. And if we do engage, evidently we must do so with expertise and not at haphazard. Hence we must acquire the pertinent expertise—we must learn logic.

Epictetus' argument might be challenged by a determined enemy of logic. But it is his conclusion which concerns me here. And the conclusion is plain as pie.

§ F: The place of logic

It is our moral duty to learn logic. Why and to what end? It is tempting to ascribe to Epictetus the utilitarianism which I earlier ascribed to Seneca. After all, Epictetus complains that philosophers do not apply logic in their lives; the complaint suggests that a chief function of logic is to serve morality—and thence it is an easy slide to the conclusion that logic is to be studied only insofar as it may subserve a moral end. Epictetus will then be a logical utilitarian.¹⁵³

No doubt he will have inherited his utilitarianism from his teacher, Musonius Rufus. In one of the surviving fragments, Musonius maintains

¹⁵³ So e.g. Bonhöffer [1890], p.3: Epictetus has 'a strictly practical interpretation of philosophy'; p.19: logic has a purely instrumental function.

that women should be allowed to study philosophy.¹⁵⁴ He is then faced with the telling objection that in such a case women ‘will practise arguments and engage in sophisms and analyse syllogisms when they should be sitting at home with their embroidery’. His reply to the objection is instructive: his philosophical women will not neglect their needles. After all, not even men will devote themselves to logic in a whole-hearted way; rather, ‘I say that when they deal with arguments they should deal with them for the sake of their actions’. In other words, men—and *a fortiori* women—will learn logic only insofar as it may be applied to ethical matters and thus contribute to moral virtue. Musonius was a utilitarian; and for him logic was the servant of ethics.

Did Epictetus take this line? Well, one of the central functions of logic, according to him, is that of providing proofs; and in particular, logic will enable us to produce proofs in ethics—for example, a proof that we should not tell lies.¹⁵⁵ But logic does not supply proofs in ethics alone (as Musonius perhaps maintained¹⁵⁶): we may and should also seek proofs in physics. Thus

if some people can hold this view of things from madness and from habit,¹⁵⁷ can no-one learn by reason and proof [ὑπὸ λόγου ... καὶ ἀποδείξεως] that god has made everything in the world and the world itself, the whole ineluctable and perfect, the parts serving the needs of the whole? (IV vii 6)¹⁵⁸

Logic provides proofs in physics too; that is to say, logic serves the needs of the other parts of philosophy.

Now not every part of standard Stoic logic contributes to the production of proofs. Indeed—as opponents of Stoic logic frequently observed—, very much of what the Stoa studied under the heading of logic cannot conceivably serve the end of scientific proof. Epictetus is as aware of the

¹⁵⁴ frag 3 Hense = Stobaeus, *ecl* II xxxi 126.

¹⁵⁵ Above, pp.38-39.

¹⁵⁶ In frag 1 Hense = Stobaeus, *ecl* II xxxi 125, Musonius acknowledges that it is necessary for us to use proofs (only the gods, for whom nothing is ἄδηλον, have no need for ἀποδείξεις); but μηδὲν ἄγαν—a philosopher should offer his pupils a few clear proofs for each doctrine, and it is a fault to compile a whole dossier of proofs for a single thesis. The examples which Musonius gives are similar in their brevity to the Zenonian syllogisms (above, p.15; below, pp.71-72); they all concern morals—and perhaps Musonius implies that all the proofs he will offer fall in the area of ethics. (On Musonius and proof see, with caution, Laurenti [1989], pp.2106-2113.)

¹⁵⁷ Perhaps Epictetus is thinking of the Christians—but ‘οἱ Γαλιλαῖοι’, which appears in the MSS, is an evident gloss (as Schweighäuser suspected: [*1799], II p.915). Compare the similar Christian gloss in Marcus, XI iii (on which see Brunt [1979]).

¹⁵⁸ See also, for proofs, I xxv 6; III xxvi 16. But the word ‘ἀπόδειξις’ in Epictetus does not always signal the presence of logic: a ‘proof’ may be provided by a style of behaviour rather than by a formal argument (e.g. I xxiv 8; xxix 33; II xvii 16-18; III x 8; xxii 69; xxiii 14; xxiv 112; IV vii 29).

fact as anyone else. Does he then, like a good utilitarian, abjure the ‘useless’ parts of the subject? Not at all. Contrasting philosophers with idle aesthetes, he remarks:

You, when you have nothing to do, are restless, you go to the theatre, you wander about.¹⁵⁹ Why shouldn’t the philosopher work on his reason? You have your crystal ware, I my Liar; you have your porcelain, I my Denier. (III ix 20-21)

Epictetus has his Liar: the paradoxes and puzzles are to him what fine porcelain¹⁶⁰ is to the aesthete—he collects them, and they divert him in his empty moments. But his ‘empty moments’ are not empty, and the philosopher’s diversions have a serious end: the paradoxes are used to exercise and improve his reasoning powers. ‘To you everything you possess seems trivial, to me all my possessions seem grand’ (§ 22). The paradoxes are not trifles.

This is not the bluff utilitarianism of Galen. Epictetus does not reject certain parts of traditional Stoic logic on the grounds that they are useless—indeed, there is no part of Stoic logic which he expressly rejects. But perhaps Epictetus supports a refined utilitarianism? He works on items which Galen regards as useless; but he works on them precisely because, in his eyes, they are not useless.¹⁶¹ If they do not directly promote the great end of logic, which is the establishment or confirmation of physical and moral doctrine by logical proof, nevertheless they promote it indirectly—they train the philosophical mind, which may then grasp proofs the more firmly and produce proofs the more readily. All the parts of logic have a value—but the value is always instrumental. ‘The third area is necessary because of the second’.¹⁶²

I do not think that Epictetus is a utilitarian, not even of the most refined sort. He says that the puzzles may help us to ‘work on’ our reason; but there is no need to give this the gloss which I gave it in the last paragraph. We have a duty to work on our reason, and the perfection of our reason has a value of its own: when, in an idle moment—which is not, to be sure, genuinely idle—, Epictetus reflects on the paradox of the Liar, he is indeed

¹⁵⁹ S has ‘ἀναλύετε’, which the apographs ‘correct’ to ‘ἀναλύετε’—accepted by Schenkl, who interprets it as ἀν-αλύετε. The word is not otherwise known—and the pun seems to me unEpictetan. I read ‘ἀλύετε’ (Salmasius): for the word in the sense of ‘wander about aimlessly’, ‘twiddle your thumbs’, see e.g. Dio Chrysostom, vii 79, with Russell *ad loc.* Note also the medical sense of the word, already in Hippocrates: e.g. Erotian, s.v. ἀλυσμόν.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Porcelain’ represents ‘μούρρινα’—objects made of felspar, *quorum accendit fragilitas pretium* (Seneca, *ben* VII ix 3): the things were first brought to Rome by Pompey for his triumph of 61 B.C.: see Pliny, *nat hist* XXXVII vii-viii 18-22.

¹⁶¹ Cf I vii, title: below, p.136.

¹⁶² *ench* 52.2: cited above, p.38.

training his intellect for future and more serious battles. But he is also doing more than that: he is doing something which is valuable, and morally valuable, in and for itself.¹⁶³

The passage from the *Encheiridion* seems more determinedly utilitarian. But the *Encheiridion* was put together as a *vade mecum*, and we should be wary of discovering in its pages rigorously articulated doctrine. In any event, I vii tells a different and a more nuanced story. In § 1, Epictetus observes that most people fail to realize that logic is ‘concerned with what it is appropriate to do [περὶ καθηκόντος]’. He does not mean, in the utilitarian vein, that logic must be *applied to* moral matters. Rather, he means that logic is *itself* a moral matter. The wise man must engage in logic; and when he does so he is morally obliged to argue correctly. There is no suggestion that the wise man will only engage in argument when ethical issues are the subject of discussion—the subject matter is irrelevant. For a mistake in logic is itself a moral error—every mistake is a moral error.

No doubt logic has value only insofar as it bears upon moral comportment. But then absolutely anything you may do—and hence absolutely anything you may do with or to a syllogism—is a piece of moral comportment.¹⁶⁴ Thus Epictetus may take a moralistic view of logic without taking a utilitarian view.¹⁶⁵ His attitude to logic is not Seneca’s attitude to logic: it is comparable rather to Seneca’s attitude to physics.¹⁶⁶

I call this attitude ‘moralistic’. You might reply: ‘Any rational man must think that, if he is going to argue at all, he ought to argue correctly. What is *moralistic* about that?’ But this presupposes a false account of Epictetus’ attitudes. Epictetus thinks, first, that you *ought* to argue, and that you *ought* to study logic. He does not think, merely, that *if* you argue, then you ought to argue well. His imperative is categorical, not hypothetical. Secondly, he thinks that the sense of ‘ought’ in which you ought to do logic and you ought to argue correctly is the same sense as the sense in which you ought to tell the truth and you ought to honour your parents. It is the peculiar view of Epictetus—or, more generally, of the Stoics—that you ought, morally, to get your syllogisms right.

¹⁶³ Cf Quintilian, I x 5: ‘It is not that Horned Arguments and little Crocodiles can make a man wise, but that he ought not to be mistaken even in trifles’. – But for Epictetus, no mistake is a trifle: I vii 30–33 (below, p.134).

¹⁶⁴ The ἔργον of man requires, *inter alia*, that we be ‘undeceivable in affirmations and suspensions of judgement’ (I iv 11)—hence the importance of logic in the matter of avoiding the traps of sophists (I xxvii 6; III vii 1). Note also that ‘conditionals are indifferent—judgements about them are not’ (II vi 1).

¹⁶⁵ And in fact the same may, for all we know, be true of Musonius: the surviving fragments are not extensive enough to determine the issue.

¹⁶⁶ But the analogy is not exact: Epictetus does not hold that the study of logic is itself a part of the good and happy life; rather, the study enables us to engage in a form of intellectual activity which is part of such a life.

II xxv argues that logic is necessary. It suggests further that logic is also in a certain sense primary—that if you have not studied logic, you cannot study anything at all. For any study will presumably proceed by argument, and you will be safe among arguments only if you have studied logic. What is suggested by II xxv is stated elsewhere in the *Discourses*. Thus at II xxiv 13-15 Epictetus explains to a would-be pupil that he cannot teach him philosophy since he is unable to prove anything to him; and he is unable to prove anything to him (or even to expose and resolve the contradictions in current opinions) because he does not yet know what a proof is (or what it is for one opinion to conflict with another).

The starting-point of philosophy is ‘the perception of conflict [αἰσθησις μάχης]’.¹⁶⁷ Men’s opinions conflict: we must first recognize the fact, then understand what conflict consists in, and finally discover a criterion with which we may resolve such conflicts. The message is clear: logic is the first subject which an aspiring philosopher must master. To be sure, it is not at all clear why philosophy does or should start from an observation of conflicting opinions, from διαφωνία—why should it not burgeon (as Aristotle thought) from a natural curiousness? But the view that conflict provokes philosophy was widespread in antiquity,¹⁶⁸ and it was certainly Epictetus’ view.

Some of the passages in which Epictetus laments that the young do logic and nothing more than logic suggest that it was common practice in his day to teach logic first. And one text explicitly confirms the suggestion:

The philosophers exercise us first in theory, where things are easier, and then lead us to what is harder; for there nothing disinclines us to follow what we are taught, whereas in matters to do with real life there are many distractions. (I xxvi 3—cf § 14)

By ‘theory [θεωρία]’ Epictetus means formal logic (see § 1). He is not suggesting that logic is an easier subject to grasp than physics or ethics: rather, it is easier to teach inasmuch as the teacher has no pre-existing prejudices or natural inclinations to combat.¹⁶⁹ And although he is here reporting the practice of his contemporaries, he does so without any hint of irony or criticism.

¹⁶⁷ II xi 13-18. For μάχη see also I v 3, 8; II i title; xvii 14; xix 1-4; xxii 1-8; xxvi 1-3.

¹⁶⁸ See esp Sextus, *PH* I 12; and for the importance of διαφωνία in Stoic philosophy see Mansfeld [1989], [1990].

¹⁶⁹ See above, p.39.

Thus Epictetus implicitly takes up a position in an old debate: the debate about the correct order of the three parts of philosophy.¹⁷⁰ The question at issue is in principle pedagogical and expository: in what order must or should pupils imbibe the parts of philosophy? in what order must or should the parts be set out in a systematic account of philosophy? Some of the considerations which are pertinent to the issue are of a psychological nature—so, for example, the considerations mooted in I xxvi. But there are also pertinent considerations which are philosophical rather than psychological in character, insofar as they concern the logical and conceptual relations among the several parts of philosophy. In general, you might maintain that the study of one subject is prior to the study of another inasmuch as a grasp of certain truths of the latter logically presupposes a grasp of certain truths of the former (but not *vice versa*). In particular, you might maintain on such grounds that the study of logic is prior to the study of physics: in order to grasp certain truths of physics you must, say, be able to construct a certain type of proof, and in order to construct proofs you must have a grasp of certain truths of logic; on the other hand, nothing in logical study presupposes a grasp of anything in physics. Hence logic should be taught—must be taught—before physics (or at least before some parts of physics).

I spoke of a debate on the question: in fact, pretty well everyone agreed that logic should come first. To those philosophers who took logic to be an ὄργανον or tool of philosophy, the primacy of logic must have seemed evident;¹⁷¹ for we need the tools in order to start the job. But of course all philosophers, whether or not they regarded logic as an essentially instrumental thing, supposed that it served the other parts of philosophy insofar as it formulated arguments and proofs; and Epictetus can use an analogy closely related to the analogy of the tool or instrument: 'Logic is a power of discriminating and examining other things—and, as it were, of weighing and measuring them.'¹⁷²

Now someone might say that there were more pressing subjects than logic. But in examining any subject whatever we shall perforce use propositions and arguments—and we shall need to know if the terms we use are ambiguous and if the arguments we produce are valid.

¹⁷⁰ See e.g. Sextus, *PH* II 13; *M* VII 20-24; Plutarch, *stoic repugn* 1035AF (with Cherniss *ad loc*).

¹⁷¹ The view is ascribed explicitly to Andronicus (see e.g. Philoponus, in *Cat* 5.18-23); but there is no reason to think that it originated with him (see Barnes [1997]). If it was not universally shared among later Peripatetics (Boethus wanted to start with physics: Philoponus, in *Cat* 5.16-18), it seems to have been generally accepted.

¹⁷² I xvii 10; for the analogy with weights and measures see also I xxviii 28-29; II xi 13-24. But the thing is a commonplace: see e.g. Zeno, *apud* Stobaeus, *ecl* II ii 12 (above, p.7 n.35); Aristocles, *apud* Eusebius, *PE* XIV xviii 10; Sextus, *PH* II 15; *M* VII 31-33; Ptolemy, *crit* i 6-7.

That, I think, is why they put logic first—just as we examine the measure before measuring the grain. For if we do not first determine what a bushel is and do not first determine what a balance is, how shall we ever be able to weigh or measure anything? So here if we have not learned—and learned accurately—the criterion through which other things are learned, shall we be able to learn accurately any of those other things? How could we? (I xvii 6-9)

If we are to know anything at all, we must first acquire a criterion of knowledge; and that criterion is provided by logic.

All this seems clear enough. But certain other passages in the *Discourses* appear to contradict it.¹⁷³ Recall, first, that logic belongs to the third of the three ‘areas’ which Epictetus sometimes distinguishes.¹⁷⁴ Now ‘the third area is appropriate to those who are already making some progress’ (III ii 5—and see § 17). That is to say, logic should be studied only after the other areas have been mastered—or at least attacked. Why so? Because the function of logic is to give us ‘security in these things, so that even when we dream or are drunk or are melancholy, an untested impression may not creep in without our noticing it’ (§ 5). The task of logic, as Epictetus here explains it, is to secure our opinions: evidently, then, before we embark on logic we must have already acquired some opinions which are worth securing.

The point is made at greater length at III xxvi 14-20, where the analogy with weighing and measuring recurs with an opposite intention.

Have you ever seen anyone building a coping¹⁷⁵ without putting it on a wall?¹⁷⁶ What porter stands where there is no door? But you are practising your skill at proofs—at proving what? You are practising so as not to be dislodged by sophisms—dislodged from what? Show me first what you are guarding—what you are measuring and weighing. Then show me the scales and the bushel. (III xxvi 15-17)

¹⁷³ Hence Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.199, insists—against the run of the text—that I xvii 6 does not represent Epictetus’ own view.

¹⁷⁴ Above, pp.34-35.

¹⁷⁵ τριγῆχος (or θριγκός): the word may mean ‘wall’, ‘enclosure’; and it is tempting to suppose an allusion to the Stoic fancy that logic is like a garden-wall (e.g. Sextus, *M* VII 17: above, p.21). The text of III xxvi 15, which is uncertain, will then be reconstructed and interpreted with this image in mind. But in fact Epictetus is plainly alluding to Plato: at *Rep* 534E (a much cited text: see Boter [1989], pp.342-343) διαλεκτική is the θριγκός or coping set on the propaedeutic μαθήματα—and hence, pertinently to our text, it is the last discipline to be studied in Plato’s educational programme.

¹⁷⁶ Reading ‘μηδενὶ τειχίῳ’ (Sb): the text is uncertain, the general drift plain.

Epictetus means, I take it, that you cannot, as a matter of logic, set a coping without having built a wall, or hire a porter (θυρωρός) without setting him by a door (θύρα); similarly, you cannot, as a matter of logic, prove or defend without having a thesis to prove or defend. The *Encheiridion* makes the same point without the similes. The third area of philosophy tells us what proofs are—hence ‘the third area is necessary because of the second, and the second because of the first; and the first is the most necessary and the area in which we should take our rest’.¹⁷⁷

Thus, according to Epictetus, we must study logic before we study anything else; and equally according to Epictetus, the study of logic is the last thing we should undertake in our intellectual careers.

Epictetus apparently contradicts himself. Can the contradiction be resolved? No text explicitly addresses the issue, and I have not found anything in the *Discourses* which delivers a satisfactory resolution.

It has been suggested that we need to distinguish between two levels of logical study. First, there is the acquisition of an elementary knowledge of the subject—the sort of thing which modern undergraduates customarily do (or fail to do) in their first year of philosophy. This sort of logical study, according to Epictetus, must be acquired before any serious progress can be made in the rest of philosophy, and this sort of logic is primary. Secondly, there is the higher study of logic—the sort of thing which graduate students undertake and which eventually clogs up the professional journals. This sort of logical study is, as it were, a luxury: it should only be undertaken by those philosophers who have already established their moral credentials.¹⁷⁸

Epictetus does not himself make this distinction: should he have done so? Not, I think, in precisely the form I have given to it; for there is no suggestion in the *Discourses* that the logical studies taken late and luxuriously involve serious and esoteric work. In III ii, it is true, the items which we are urged to postpone are hypothetical arguments and changing arguments (§ 17); but III ii and III xxvi also talk of proofs—and most of the proofs with which a moralist or a physicist will be concerned will have a fairly elementary logical structure.

There is another distinction, related but different, which Epictetus does make—or rather, which is implicit in his various remarks. It is a distinction not between two levels of logical study but between two uses of logic. Roughly speaking, you may regard logic as an instrument of discovery and you may regard logic as a preservative of knowledge. On the one hand, logic may be used in the gaining of new items of knowledge—either positively, insofar as it enables you to infer one belief from another, or negatively, insofar as it enables you to avoid the various snares and

¹⁷⁷ *ench* 52.2: above, p.38.

¹⁷⁸ See Bonhöffer [1890], p.20; [1894], p.123.

sophisms which are set along the path to knowledge. On the other hand, logic may be used to furnish the proofs which are supposed to consolidate and to systematize the knowledge which you have already acquired. The standard Aristotelian view of logic makes logic primarily a preservative,¹⁷⁹ and the Old Stoa seems to have regarded logic rather as a method of discovery;¹⁸⁰ but there is no reason in the world to choose between these two uses—they are complementary rather than concurrent. Epictetus evidently had time for each of the two uses of logic. Inasmuch as logic is useful in learning new truths, you must learn some logic before you embark on other disciplines—or at least, learn it *pari passu* with the other disciplines. Inasmuch as logic is useful in preserving old truths, you will have use for it after you have acquired knowledge in some other disciplines.

It is thus reasonably clear what *should* have been Epictetus' position in the debate over the priority of logic. He should have said that logic must be acquired as soon as anything is acquired; and he should have added that certain parts of logic cannot be exercised until other items of knowledge have been amassed. We can make Epictetus say what he should have said if we treat as rhetorical exaggeration those passages in which he says that logic should not be studied until you have acquired some other items of knowledge: he *says* that logic must not be done *until* you have some items of knowledge on which to exercise it; he *means* that logic must not be done *unless* you are going to acquire some items of knowledge on which to exercise it.

Did Epictetus 'really mean' this? Plutarch accuses Chrysippus of precisely the inconsistency which we find in the *Discourses*. He also remarks that

in *On the Use of Reason* Chrysippus writes that, when you take up logic as the first subject, you should not altogether abstain from the others but rather take part in them too to the extent that it is offered to you. (*stoic repugn* 1035E)

For Chrysippus, I suppose, 'Learn logic first' was a slogan, not a doctrine: the doctrine—if such it may be called—was the more nuanced view expressed in *On the Use of Reason*. It is not absurdly charitable to suppose that Epictetus held a similar view—which was no doubt as orthodox as it is banal.

¹⁷⁹ See Barnes [1969].

¹⁸⁰ See Barnes [1980].

§ G: The syllabus

An ancient philosophical education normally included instruction in both the ancient forms of logic: in Stoic hypothetical syllogistic and in Peripatetic categorical syllogistic. (Categorical syllogistic is the theory of categorical arguments, hypothetical syllogistic the theory of hypothetical arguments. An argument is categorical if all its component propositions—its premisses and its conclusion—are categorical propositions; and an argument is hypothetical if at least one of its components is a hypothetical proposition. A proposition is hypothetical if it is a compound of two or more propositions—a conditional, a disjunction, a conjunction. A proposition is categorical if it is not hypothetical.¹⁸¹) Both syllogistics are found in Galen's *Introduction to Logic*, both in Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*—and Aulus Gellius manifests a gentlemanly acquaintance with the elements of each.¹⁸² Some logicians regarded the two logics as in some sense rivals: thus a Peripatetic or a Stoic might claim that the logic of his own School was complete and perfect, and that everything in the other system was either reducible to something in his own or else superfluous.¹⁸³ But generally the two syllogistics were treated as complementary rather than as concurrent, and a student of logic would study both. (And even if you were a logical partisan, you would no doubt have studied your opponent's arsenal.)

In his discussion of the use of proofs, Musonius offers two illustrative arguments.

If someone takes the known assumption that everything good is choiceworthy and further assumes another known item, that some pleasures are not choiceworthy, we prove that pleasure is not good. ... Positing the evident assumption that everything bad is to be avoided, and positing further the more evident assumption that many pains are not to be avoided, it is inferred that pain is not bad. (frag 2 [p.2.12-15, 19-22 Hense] = Stobaeus, *ecI* II xxxi 125)

The arguments are set out with reasonable formality; but they are not decked in Stoic dress. Rather they are—mildly heterodox—Aristotelian syllogisms in *Baroco*.¹⁸⁴ There are parallels to Musonius' examples in the

¹⁸¹ See e.g. Galen, *inst log* vii 4. – The characterisation I give in the text is rough, but there is no need here for irritating precision.

¹⁸² See Holford-Strevens [1988], p.169.

¹⁸³ See e.g. Mueller [1969]; Frede [1974b].

¹⁸⁴ See Aristotle, *APr* 26a36-b1. The schema is:

textbooks;¹⁸⁵ and it seems unlikely that this is an accident. I infer that Musonius knew his categorical syllogistic—and that he probably taught it in his school. The conclusion should not surprise.

Now in Epictetus there is no explicit reference to Peripatetic logic; nor have I noticed any implicit reference—no casual allusion or turn of phrase which might betray a knowledge of the subject. Perhaps this is due to chance, the lost portions of the *Discourses* containing some hints at Aristotle's logic. Or perhaps Epictetus knew categorical syllogistic and—for some reason we cannot divine—deliberately hid his knowledge. Or perhaps Epictetus was simply not acquainted with the Peripatetic form of logic.¹⁸⁶ However that may be, for our purposes the logic shown up in the *Discourses* is Stoic logic.

And in the first place it is the logic of the Old Stoa.¹⁸⁷ Epictetus refers by name, in logical contexts, to three earlier logicians: to Chrysippus,¹⁸⁸ to Antipater; and to Archedemus.¹⁸⁹ And to all three together—alongside

B holds of every A.

B does not hold of some C.

Therefore: A does not hold of some C.

The 'mild heterodoxy' consists in the fact that Musonius expresses the two conclusions without an explicit quantifier.

¹⁸⁵ E.g. Galen, *inst log* vii 6.

¹⁸⁶ In all the *Discourses* there is only one reference—a slighting reference—to the Peripatetics (II ix 20-22), and I find little reason to think that Epictetus had conned his Aristotle, whom he never even names. (The importance of προαίρεσις in Epictetus' moral philosophy may make modern scholars think of Aristotle: no reason to imagine that ancient thinkers would have had the same reaction; and even if the remote origin of Epictetus' ideas in this area is to be found in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that work was certainly not his 'source'—see e.g. Dobbin [1991].) — For Epictetus' knowledge of Plato see above, n.136; there are also a couple of references to Polemo, and one to Xenocrates. On the sceptical Academy see I v and II xx; and note the crossing of swords with Favorinus: Favorinus wrote Πρὸς Ἐπίκτητον (Galen, *opt doct* I 41 Kühn), and Galen replied on Epictetus' behalf (*lib prop* XIX 44 Kühn); see also Gellius, XVII xix = frag X. (And there is one allusion to the Pyrrhonists.) The Epicureans are coupled with the Academics in II xx, and they get a dozen further references, mostly scathing. In connexion with the Master Argument Epictetus refers to the 'Megarics' Diodorus Cronus and Panthoides (see above, p.44)—but it is reasonable to assume that what he knew of them he gleaned from Chrysippus' works. In general, the *Discourses* betray little interest in or knowledge of non-Stoic philosophy. But this is, in itself, anything but remarkable; and it would be rash to infer that the students in Epictetus' school were ignorant of every philosophy but Stoicism, and equally rash to infer an ignorance (or even a lack of interest) on Epictetus' own part.

¹⁸⁷ In general, Epictetus follows the Old Stoics, as Gellius, XIX i 14 (= Epictetus, frag IX) remarked: 8 references to Zeno, 9 to Cleanthes, 17 to Chrysippus, 1 to Diogenes of Babylon, 5 each to Archedemus and Antipater; but figures of this sort are at best a crude indication—the nature of the references shows that Chrysippus towers over the rest. No reference to Panaetius or to Posidonius. Two references to Euphrates, 6 to Musonius.

¹⁸⁸ For Epictetus' knowledge of Chrysippus see Hershbell [1993].

¹⁸⁹ I xvii 13; II xvii 34, 40; III xxi 7 (Chrysippus); II xvii 40; III xxi 7 (Antipater); II xvii 40; III xxi 7 (Archedemus).

Cleanthes—in connexion with the Master Argument (II xix 8-10). There is also a reference to Crinis—and although Epictetus does not refer to him for his logic, he does refer to him as a logician.¹⁹⁰

The paucity of references is not surprising. The *Discourses* is not a set of scholarly essays, and Epictetus had surely read—and had got his pupils to read—numerous items to which his recorded conversations do not allude. In any event, who is missing? Zeno—who did little for logic.¹⁹¹ Diogenes of Babylon—whose interests (or whose special contributions) lay rather in the study of language than in logic proper.¹⁹² Apollodorus of Seleucia¹⁹³ and Dionysius of Cyrene,¹⁹⁴ both of them pupils of Diogenes. Posidonius—who certainly interested himself in logic.¹⁹⁵ Otherwise, no-one we can readily name.¹⁹⁶ But there were indubitably other books whose authors have disappeared together with their works. For although we should not imagine that the ‘Stoic books’ loaded with little arguments to which Epictetus once alludes¹⁹⁷ were books on or about logic, there will have been many Stoic books on the subject. Perhaps there were some formal commentaries by Stoics on classical Stoic texts: at any rate, Aristocles, who wrote a commentary in four books on Chrysippus’ *How we speak and think of things*,¹⁹⁸ surely had something to say about logic.¹⁹⁹ And there were handbooks—introductions or outlines, *εἰσαγωγαί* or *ὑποτυπώσεις*.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁰ III ii 15; cf Diogenes Laertius, VII 71 (α διαλεκτικὴ τέχνη); see Guérard [1994a].

¹⁹¹ See above, p.7; Rist [1978a]—who, however, ascribes far too much logic to Zeno.

¹⁹² See e.g. Guérard [1994b].

¹⁹³ See Diogenes Laertius, VII 54, 64; Goulet-Cazé [1989].

¹⁹⁴ See Barnes [1988], pp.93-95; Dorandi [1994].

¹⁹⁵ See Kidd [1978]; Barnes [1989].

¹⁹⁶ Save, perhaps, Diodotus, Cicero’s teacher (see *Brutus* xc 309); Lucius Aelius Stilo, the first Latin logician (Gellius, XVI viii 2). – And see above, pp.4-5.

¹⁹⁷ I xxix 56—cited above, p.56.

¹⁹⁸ Suda, s.v. Ἀριστοκλήης: see Follet [1989a], who suggests—without compelling reason—that this Aristocles is the pupil of Chrysippus mentioned in *ind stoic* xlvii 7.

¹⁹⁹ Other Stoic commentaries on Stoic texts (above, pp.50-51)? The only case I know of is Theo of Alexandria, who flourished under Augustus and wrote a commentary on Apollodorus’ *Φυσιολογικὴ εἰσαγωγή* (Suda, s.v. Θεῶν Ἀλεξανδρέως). Zeller [1909], p.607, guesses that at *ind stoic* lxxix 2 we should supplement ‘Θέων Ἀλεξανδρέως’ but there are half a dozen other possibilities. I should also mention Herophilus, *Περὶ στωικῆς ὀνομάτων χρήσεως*, known from a single passage in Origen (*in Psalm prol* 14-15 Rietz), which was a work of exegesis in a broad sense of the term, and which may have contained discussion of some logical jargon. (But the only surviving ὀνόματα are ‘τέλος’ and ‘θεός’.) Herophilus’ dates are unknown—no reason to identify him with the Hellenistic doctor (nor to emend him out of existence—pace von Staden [*1989], p.584). Since he writes of the Stoics in the third person he was perhaps not a Stoic himself. (See esp Neuschäfer [1987], pp.146-155, who suggests that there are other traces of Herophilus in Origen.) – However that may be, there certainly were non-Stoic commentaries on Stoic texts: Galen wrote at least four works in at least 16 books on Stoic logic, including commentaries (ὑπομνήματα) on Chrysippus’ *Συλλογιστικὴ* (*lib prop* XIX 47 Kühn).

²⁰⁰ See e.g. II xvi 34; xvii 40 (where ‘συναγωγάς’ should not be changed to ‘συντάξεις’); Gellius, XVI viii 1; Sextus, *M* VIII 428. None has survived, whereas for ethics

Some at least of these hypothetical handbooks will, I suppose, have been written by Epictetus' contemporaries. Are there any allusions in Epictetus to contemporary research in logic, to original logical work? One text seems at first glance to be pertinent.

Someone asked him how it was that, though reason is more exercised nowadays, greater progress was made in the past. He said: In what respect have we exercised and in what respect was progress then greater? For you will find that where we now exercise, there we have now made progress. Nowadays we exercise to analyse syllogisms, and we make progress there. Then they exercised to maintain their minds in a natural state, and made progress there. (III vi 1-3)

Epictetus is plainly contrasting the Old Stoa with contemporary Stoicism. And it is tempting to take him to mean that whereas the Old Stoics made progress in ethics—that is to say, in the ethical part of philosophy—, the contemporary school was making progress in logic (and, in particular, in the analysis of syllogisms).

But temptation must be resisted. The purpose of the passage is not to contrast the masters of the Old Stoa with the masters of the New; rather, it is to contrast the philosophical attainments of old Stoic students with the philosophical attainments of contemporary Stoic students. Epictetus' interlocutor wonders why, when he and his contemporaries exercise their minds so strenuously, they make less progress towards virtue and happiness than did the relatively idle pupils of Chrysippus. Epictetus' mildly ironical answer is this: 'You do make progress, just as they did, in what you practise—but all you practise is your logical exercises.'²⁰¹ Perhaps Epictetus has in mind a *bon mot* ascribed to Cleanthes:

Someone asked him why, although there were not many philosophers in the older generation, there were more stars then than now. He replied: 'Then they attended to things [πράγματα], now we attend to words [λόγοι]'. (Stobaeus, *ecI* II ii 16)

The sense is different, the sentiment the same.²⁰²

The passage at III vi 1-3, then, does not advert to original logical work in the time of Epictetus; nor have I found any other text which carries such an allusion. But it would be foolish to draw any interesting conclusions

chance has preserved the opening pages of a Stoic textbook: Hierocles, Ἡθικὴ στοιχείωσις—see Bastianini and Long [*1992].

²⁰¹ Cf I iv 17; II x 30; xvi 4.

²⁰² And the *general* sentiment—Fings ain't wot they used to be—is an ancient (and a contemporary) commonplace: e.g. Dio Chrysostom, xlii 13-15 (on philosophy in particular); vii 89 with Russell *ad loc.* We should not be too distressed by the apparent conflict between this commonplace and the commonplace that philosophers have always been immoral hypocrites (above, pp.41-42).

from this silence. If Epictetus does not affirm, neither does he deny, that new work was being done by the logicians of his day. Nor should we expect assertions or implications of this sort in the *Discourses*.

Again, Epictetus' pupils doubtless followed some sort of 'syllabus' in logic, as in other parts of philosophy; but Epictetus nowhere describes such a syllabus: the *Discourses* do not constitute a handbook, and the last thing they purport to be is a systematic exposition of the outlines of Stoicism; and as for the *Encheiridion*, if it may be called a handbook, it is not a handbook to Stoicism as a whole—or to logic in particular. Nonetheless we do happen to learn that Epictetus' pupils engaged in some simple logical exercises (II xvi 2); that they 'did' syllogisms, and changing arguments (II xiii 21; xvii 27); that they worked through the logical puzzles (III viii 1). And other texts—Galen's *Introduction to Logic*, for example—allow us to guess at the general contents of the school syllabus.

But if Epictetus offers us neither an account of contemporary research in logic nor yet a description of the orthodox logic of his day, we do find something else in his pages—for his more or less casual allusions to logic give an implicit indication of those parts or aspects of the subject which Epictetus' contemporaries found especially rivetting.

The allusions are mostly brief, and they are repetitive. There are frequent references to syllogisms, in an entirely general fashion. More specifically, Epictetus often mentions the 'analysis' of syllogisms.²⁰³ He speaks of 'hypothetical' arguments.²⁰⁴ He alludes to λόγοι μεταπίπτοντες or 'changing' arguments.²⁰⁵ He refers to enthymemes.²⁰⁶ He talks of the sophisms and the conundrums, in general and individually.²⁰⁷ There are three allusions to arguments 'which conclude by way of questioning [ἐν τῷ ῥωτῆσθαι περαίνοντες]'.²⁰⁸

Most of these allusions contribute little to our understanding of Stoic logic—and do not even give us much knowledge of Epictetus' views on the subject. The most interesting of them concern the analysis of syllogisms, hypothetical arguments, and changing arguments. I shall give a section to each of these three items. I add here a note on the sophisms and conundrums.

²⁰³ I xxix 34; II iii 4; xxi 17; xxiii 44; III vi 3; xxiv 78; xxvi 18; IV iv 14; vi 12.

²⁰⁴ I vii 1, 22-29; xxvi 1, 9, 13; II xxi 17; III ii 6, 17; xxiv 78, 80; IV iv 14.

²⁰⁵ I vii 1, 13-21; II xiii 21; xvii 27; xxi 17; xxiii 41; III ii 6, 17; xxiv 80; IV vi 15; xii 12. — At III ii 8 'ἁμεταπτώσια' presumably puns on the 'μεταπίπτοντες' of § 6; perhaps there is a similar pun at III xxvi 13-14.

²⁰⁶ I viii 1-2: above, p.58.

²⁰⁷ II xvi 3; III viii 1; xxvi 16. — Note that at I xxvii 2 the word 'σοφίσματα' refers not to logical puzzles but to the sceptical arguments of the Academics and the Pyrrhonians.

²⁰⁸ I vii 1; III ii 6; xxi 10: below, pp.136-138.

There are five references to the most celebrated of all logical conundrums, the Liar.²⁰⁹ And the Denier, to which Epictetus once alludes, was no doubt a variant on the Liar.²¹⁰ None of these texts explains wherein the paradox lies—let alone suggests a solution, or even a line of inquiry. There is an isolated reference, again without any explanation, to the Sorites.²¹¹ One passage evidently alludes playfully to the Horned Man.²¹² The only other Stoic sophism or conundrum to which I have found an allusion is the Master Argument—for which, as I have remarked, Epictetus happens to be our primary source.²¹³

II xix bears the title ‘Against those who take up the ideas of the philosophers only as far as talking goes’. It opens abruptly.

The Master Argument seems to have been propounded on this basis: the following three items are in mutual conflict with one another—that everything past which is true is necessary, that the impossible does not follow the possible, that things are possible which neither are true nor will be. (§ 1)

Epictetus then reports that Diodorus upheld the first two of the three propositions and therefore denied the third; that some people held on to the second and third of the propositions and denied the first; and that others held on to the first and third and denied the second. In § 2 he says that Cleanthes—or perhaps the school of Cleanthes—‘seems [δοκοῦσι]’ to have taken the second position and that Antipater ‘largely supported him’. From § 5 we learn that Chrysippus patronised the third position. No-one, it seems, attempted to conserve all three propositions. At any rate, Epictetus asserts roundly that ‘it is impossible to keep all three because of the mutual conflict’ (§ 4). And then he turns to reflect on the appropriate attitude for a philosopher to take toward the Argument.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ See II xvii 34; xviii 18; xxi 17; III ii 6; ix 21 (above, p.64). Texts on the Liar (‘What I say is false ...’) in Hülser [*1987], frags 1210-1226. Note that Chrysippus had written at vast length on the puzzle (Diogenes Laertius, VII 196-197).

²¹⁰ For the Denier (ἀποφάσκων) see Diogenes Laertius, VII 44; Clement, *strom* V i 11.6.

²¹¹ II xviii 18 (above, p.39), where Epictetus uses the alternative name of “Ἡσυχάζων”. Texts on the Sorites (‘A single grain of sand does not make a heap; if you add a single grain to something which is not a heap you do not thereby get a heap ...’) in Hülser [*1987], frags 1236-1243; see Barnes [1982].

²¹² See I xviii 16. For the Horned Man (‘What you have not lost you still possess; you have not lost horns: ...’) see esp Gellius, XVI ii (below, n.285); cf Hülser [*1987], pp.1760-1761.

²¹³ It would no doubt be fanciful to detect an allusion to Seneca’s mice (above, p.14) at III ii 15. With the mice compare Chrysippus’ waggon (‘What you say comes out of your mouth; you say a waggon ...’): Diogenes Laertius, VII 187; cf Clement, *strom* VIII ix 26.5. – The list of paradoxes in Diogenes Laertius, VII 44, contains three items which do not appear anywhere in Epictetus: the Nobody, the Veiled Man, the Mower; and Diogenes’ list is incomplete—there were many other puzzles to which Epictetus makes no reference (texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1199-1257).

²¹⁴ See above, pp.35, 44-45.

The text frustrates scholars. Grateful that Epictetus has at any rate preserved the Argument from oblivion, they wish that he had formulated its three constituent propositions a little more rigorously, and that he had indicated why they were generally taken to form an inconsistent triad.²¹⁵ An intelligible wish—but one which Epictetus had no reason to satisfy. For in II xix he is not concerned to discuss the Master Argument, nor even to expound it. The opening paragraphs should be read as though they were in inverted commas: their function is not to give a formal exposition of the Argument; rather, it is to mimic an attitude which Epictetus deplores—the exegetical and doxographical attitude to philosophical issues.²¹⁶ A precise and thoughtful account of the Argument—an account of the sort which modern scholarship desiderates and which Epictetus himself demanded of his contemporaries—would have been wholly out of place.

In short, even in II xix Epictetus tells us nothing—save accidentally—about the paradoxes themselves: no expositions, no solutions.²¹⁷ But his texts do make their contribution to what might be called the sociology of logic. For they show, first and uncontroversially, that Epictetus' contemporaries were fascinated by this particular aspect of Old Stoic logic—just as the Old Stoics themselves had been. They show, secondly, that Epictetus himself thought that the puzzles were not trifles—that they were a proper object of a philosopher's attention, and that the wise man must know how to deal with them.²¹⁸ (Here, at least, his attitude differed from the attitude of Seneca.) And thirdly, I think that Epictetus realized that, in general, the puzzles were not mere party tricks; for whether or not he knew, as Chrysippus had known, that the puzzles—some of them at least—raise fundamental questions in logic, he never insinuates that they are superficial rather than profound, tangential rather than central.

§ H: Analysis

'You analyse syllogisms': the word 'analysis'—my English does no more than transliterate the Greek—has more than one technical sense. In general—and vaguely enough—to analyse something is to divide it up or reduce it to its simple components; and the particular technical senses which, in a logical text, the word may assume, are determined by the

²¹⁵ On the Argument itself see now Gaskin [1995], with full discussion of earlier interpretations; Denyer [1996].

²¹⁶ Above, pp.43–45, 54–55.

²¹⁷ I assume—perhaps optimistically—that there were preferred, and perhaps even new, solutions going the rounds. We happen to know from Galen that the Sorites was widely discussed in the imperial period, and that various solutions to it had been canvassed: see Barnes [1982].

²¹⁸ See above, p.65.

different ways in which you may speak of ‘dividing’ something or of reducing a complex to its simple parts.²¹⁹ When Epictetus speaks of analysing syllogisms, I take him to have a technical notion of analysis in mind. It is true that the noun ‘ἀνάλυσις’ and the verb ‘ἀναλύειν’ were also used in less technical ways; and in a few ancient texts it is tempting—and even plausible—to believe that the phrase ‘analyse syllogisms’ means little more than ‘do logic’.²²⁰ But Epictetus frequently sets the analysis of syllogisms on a level with the exploring of hypothetical arguments or the study of sophisms, so that analysis should be something specific rather than the general exercise of ‘doing logic’. Moreover, the notion should be reasonably technical; for the contexts in which Epictetus refers to analysis suggest an exercise which is both fairly difficult—the sort of thing a young man might pride himself on—and also removed, or at least apparently removed, from any practical application.

Now in its central and most technical sense the term ‘analysis’ refers to the reduction of certain arguments or argument-schemata to other, more fundamental, arguments or schemata. Analysis, in this sense, is in effect proof; for to analyse one argument or schema into another is to prove that the one is valid if the other is valid.²²¹ A little more precisely: you analyse a given argument schema into a set of argument schemata insofar as you demonstrate that if each member of the set is a valid schema, then the given schema is a valid schema. (Similarly for arguments.)

Thus Peripatetic logicians, following Aristotle, would analyse second- and third-figure syllogisms into first-figure syllogisms. A trifling example: take an argument in *Cesare*, of the second figure. The schema for such an argument is:

M holds of no N.
M holds of every X.

Therefore: N holds of no X.

Aristotle reasons thus:

Let M be predicated of no N and of every X. Since the negative converts, N will hold of no M. But M is supposed to hold of every X. Hence N will hold of no X—this has already been proved. (*APr* 27a5-9)

²¹⁹ See e.g. Alexander, in *APr* 7.12-33; Alcinous, *didask* 5 [pp.156-157 Hermann]; Ammonius, in *APr* 5.10-7.25.

²²⁰ So perhaps Marcus, I xvii 22. (But at Musonius, frag 3 [p.12.9-10 Hense] = Stobaeus, *ecI* II xxxi 126—above, p.63—I assume that a technical sense is intended.)

²²¹ Note Aristotle’s use of ‘ἀπόδειξις’ in connection with such analyses or reductions (e.g. *APr* 27b3; 28a23).

That is to say, a little more formally:²²²

1 (1)	M holds of no N	premiss
2 (2)	M holds of every X	premiss
1 (3)	N holds of no M	1, conversion
1, 2 (4)	N holds of no X	3, 2 <i>Celarent</i>

Here (1) and (2) are the schematic premisses for an argument in *Cesare*, and (4) is the conclusion. The argument shows that, given those premisses, we may reach the conclusion by the use of exactly two principles of inference: the conversion principle for universal negative propositions,²²³ and the syllogistic form *Celarent*.²²⁴ Thus if the schemata for *Celarent* and for the conversion of universal negatives are valid, then the schema for *Cesare* is valid. That is to say, *Cesare* has been reduced to *Celarent* and the conversion principle.²²⁵

Analysis in Aristotelian logic is trivial: the number of syllogistic schemata which the logic permits is finite (and small); and it is easy enough to reduce all valid schemata to schemata of the first figure—indeed, to *Barbara* and *Celarent*. The work was already done by Aristotle himself in the *Prior Analytics*. Analysis in Stoic logic is more difficult, if only because there are infinitely many valid schemata in hypothetical syllogistic so that we cannot simply survey all the possible forms and proceed to analyse them *seriatim*.

Our information about Stoic analysis is scarce and in parts obscure.²²⁶ But it is reasonably clear that classical Stoic logic took the five

²²² And in a style which is intended to point up the similarity between ancient analysis and the sort of proofs which tiro logicians are now invited to construct at the end of each chapter of their elementary textbooks.

²²³ The schema for such conversion is this:

A holds of no B.

Therefore: B holds of no A.

²²⁴ The schema for *Celarent* is:

A holds of no B.

B holds of every C.

Therefore: A holds of no C.

²²⁵ My version of the reduction sets *Celarent* and the conversion precisely on a par: hence *Cesare* is analysed into *two* other schemata. Ancient logicians speak of reducing *Cesare* to *Celarent*—conversion is, so to speak, the way by which the analysis proceeds rather than one of the items to which it proceeds. There are delicate exegetical issues here, and I have clomped over them—but in the end, the distinction implicit in the ancient texts is of no logical significance.

²²⁶ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1160-1189; on Stoic analysis see esp Becker [1957]; Frede [1974a], pp.167-197; Ierodiakonou [1990]; Mignucci [1993]; Bobzien [1996].

'indemonstrable' forms of Chrysippus as its base,²²⁷ and attempted to analyse all other syllogisms into syllogisms manifesting these fundamental forms. Syllogisms in the five basic forms—like the syllogisms in the four first-figure forms of the Peripatetics—are evidently valid, or at least are taken to be evidently valid; and they are called 'indemonstrable' [ἀναπόδεικτος] inasmuch as they do not need to be demonstrated or proved.²²⁸ Any other argument needs to be demonstrated; that is to say, it must be proved to be valid by reduction to one or more of the five indemonstrables.

Sextus reports a fairly simple example of a Stoic reduction.

The argument in question is compounded from a second and a third indemonstrable, as can be learned from the analysis—which will become clearer if we conduct it in terms of the schema,²²⁹ viz:

If both A and B, then C.

Not C.

A.

Therefore: not B.

Since we have a conditional in which the antecedent is a conjunction of A and B and the consequent is C, and we also have the opposite of the consequent

²²⁷ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1128-1137. – The five forms may be described as follows (see e.g. Sextus, *PH* II 157-158):

- (1) From a conditional and its antecedent the consequent follows.
- (2) From a conditional and an opposite of its consequent an opposite of its antecedent follows.
- (3) From a negated conjunction and one of its conjuncts an opposite of the remaining conjunct follows.
- (4) From a disjunction and one its disjuncts an opposite of the remaining disjunct follows.
- (5) From a disjunction and an opposite of one its disjuncts the remaining disjunct follows.

Note: (i) In (3), (4), and (5) it is assumed that conjunctions and disjunctions have precisely *two* component conjuncts or disjuncts—it is not clear that this condition was always imposed. (ii) The indemonstrables are sometimes expressed by way of schemata (see e.g. Sextus, *M* VIII 227; Galen, *inst log* vi 6), so that instead of (1) we have

- (1') If A, then B; A: therefore, B.

The standard schemata are not all equivalent to their metalogical correlates, (1)-(5) (see below, n.309); I prefer the metalogical mode of exposition—but I take no line on what the official Stoic view of the matter was or on whether there was any official view.

²²⁸ For the sense of ἀναπόδεικτος see Sextus, *PH* II 156; Galen, *inst log* viii 1 (cf Frede [1974a], pp.127-129): the standard English translation, 'indemonstrable', is misleading.

²²⁹ Stoic schemata are properly expressed by way of ordinal numerals ('The first', 'the second', ...: Apuleius, *int* xiii [p.212 Moreschini]; cf the vignette from Fronto, above, p.49); but no harm is done here by the use of letters.

(‘Not C’), we shall infer the opposite of the antecedent— ‘Therefore: not both A and B’—by a second indemonstrable. (Indeed this is itself potentially present in the argument, since we have the premisses which conclude to it, but it is not expressly stated.) Taking this²³⁰ together with the remaining premiss—A—we shall infer the conclusion ‘Therefore: not B’ by a third indemonstrable. (*M* VIII 235-236)

Sextus’ description might be set out a little more briefly and a little more formally as follows:

1 (1)	If both A and B, then C	premiss
2 (2)	Not C	premiss
3 (3)	A	premiss
1, 2 (4)	Not both A and B	1, 2 second indemonstrable
1, 2, 3 (5)	Not B	3, 4 third indemonstrable

The argument depends solely on the second and the third indemonstrables. Hence the schema in question is valid if the second and the third indemonstrables are valid.

In setting out the argument, Sextus adverts—in parentheses—to a general principle which he had earlier formulated thus:

When we have the premisses which yield a certain conclusion, we have the conclusion too potentially among them, even if it is not expressly stated. (§ 231)

This is, to say the least, vague; nor is it clear what function the principle is supposed to play in the reduction. Classical Stoic reductions or analyses apparently made use of certain rules or principles which the Stoics called ‘θέματα’. But Sextus’ principle is not itself a θέμα, and it is far from clear how it is related to the θέματα. What were the θέματα? how many of them were there? how precisely did they function in analysis? how did the Stoics think of analysis? how would they standardly have set out an analysis? Such questions are controversial. And if the general gist of the matter is not in doubt, the logical details are all uncertain—and will remain uncertain until new texts turn up.²³¹

Yet if the logic is mostly dark, one historical fact is bright enough. Galen remarks that:

You can now find any number of people who are expertly practised in how syllogisms with two²³² tropics are analysed, and how indifferently concluding

²³⁰ Reading ‘ὅπερ’ (Kochalsky) for ‘ἅπερ’.

²³¹ A text of Galen’s *Περὶ ἀποδείξεως*, for example: the Greek is lost (apart from a few fragments); but substantial portions of the work reportedly survive in an Arabic translation.

²³² Some MSS read ‘three’, and some scholars have liked ‘two or three’.

arguments and others of this type are analysed,²³³ by using the first and second θέμα; and with other syllogisms which²³⁴ they analyse by the third and fourth θέματα. Yet most of these can be analysed more economically in a different way, as Antipater wrote—and in any case, the whole matter of such syllogisms is much labour spent on a useless object, as Chrysippus himself witnesses (inasmuch as nowhere in his writings does he need such syllogisms in order to prove his doctrines). (*PHP* V 224 Kühn)

The text is difficult; and my translation has papered over a few cracks. But the difficulties are here irrelevant; for the pertinent facts are in the clear.

In Galen's time there were plenty of people who prided themselves on their skill in analysing certain syllogistic forms by way of the θέματα. Galen himself regards this as a waste of time, for two distinct reasons: first, Antipater had long ago shown that there were simpler ways of doing the analyses; secondly, the syllogistic forms in question, being scientifically useless, are not in any case worth reducing.²³⁵

What in fact was the reason for conducting analyses? Plainly Epictetus, when he talks of analysing syllogisms, is thinking primarily of school exercises. Thus he speaks of someone

who has practised analysing syllogisms, and if someone offers him an easy one [εὐλutron] he says: 'Give me something more ingeniously constructed so that I can train myself'. (I xxix 34)

Galen too is not thinking of advanced logicians who were engaged in logical research: his men are going through familiar hoops. But if the exercises did not demand any great logical imagination or originality, they were not easy to master and they required some logical talent or expertise. I suppose that the men who wasted their time on such tricks in Galen's day were the sons and grandsons of the men who analysed syllogisms in Epictetus' time.

How did Epictetus' boys tackle their exercises? Epictetus never refers to the θέματα. Now Antipater, according to Galen, had introduced a 'more economical' way of analysing certain types of syllogism. Neither Galen nor anyone else tells us what this method was; and all we know is that it was in some respect briefer than some standard method which, in the particular cases at issue, involved the use of two θέματα. One guess has it that Antipater invented a way of analysing these syllogisms by the use of a

²³³ A 'tropic' is a compound assertible, so that 'syllogisms with two tropics' are syllogisms two of the premisses of which are complex assertibles (see e.g. I xxix 40; Galen, *inst log* vii 1; Alexander, in *APr* 20.7—but there are difficulties with the terminology: Frede [1974a], p.101 n.25; Barnes *et al* [*1991], p.69 n.103). An argument concludes 'indifferently' if its conclusion is identical with one of its premisses (e.g. Alexander, in *Top* 10.10-12; cf Frede [1974a], p.184).

²³⁴ Reading 'ἐπ' ἄλλοις ὅσους'.

²³⁵ On Galen's utilitarianism in logic see above, p.20.

single θέμα. But there is another possibility: perhaps Antipater abandoned the θέματα altogether. After all, the analysis which I took from Sextus does not expressly involve a θέμα—and yet it contains no logical lacuna. Thus whatever the standard function of the θέματα may have been, it is clear that they cannot have been logically essential parts of every Stoic analysis. Perhaps Antipater saw this, or stressed it? Perhaps he developed techniques of analysis—such as the technique illustrated by Sextus—which did not make use of θέματα? And perhaps the fact that Epictetus does not refer to θέματα indicates that he and his students preferred to follow the more economical methods of Antipater?²³⁶

However that may be (and it is, of course, riotously speculative), Epictetus does at least offer us some evidence for the nature of logical studies—of a student's logical studies—in his day. Alas, the evidence of the *Discourses* adds little to our understanding of Stoic logic itself. For Epictetus nowhere conducts an illustrative analysis or indicates how his students were supposed to attempt their exercises.

As an appendage to this section I may discuss briefly one pertinent and puzzling text. The short discourse II iii is formally devoted to a ticklish and topical question: how should one write letters of recommendation on behalf of philosophy students? Epictetus reports an anecdote about the Cynic Diogenes: when a student asked him for a letter of recommendation, he asked: What is the use of my writing to X that you are a good man? If he can discriminate the good from the bad, he will himself recognize that you are good; if he cannot, a thousand letters will not help him. Epictetus apparently takes this silly remark to convey an important and lamentable truth. He reflects on it thus:

We need for lives the sort of thing we have for coins, so that I could speak like the assayer who says: 'Bring me any coin you like and I will appraise it'. Now in the case of syllogisms I say: 'Bring me any one you like and I will distinguish the analytical from the non-analytical [τὸν ἀναλυτικὸν τε καὶ μὴ]'.—How?—I know how to analyse syllogisms. I have the capacity which anyone must have if he is going to appraise those who succeed in syllogisms. But in the case of lives what do I do? Sometimes I call one good and at other times bad. What is the reason for this? The opposite of what is the case with the syllogisms—ignorance and inexperience. (II iii 3-5)

When it comes to assessing lives—that is to say, to assessing whether a man has lived or is living a good or a bad life—we lack the discriminative capacity which any assayer has for coins and which we philosophers have for syllogisms. The general point of the text is plain;²³⁷ but what exactly

²³⁶ See below, pp. 140-141.

²³⁷ And cf I xxvi 17.

does Epictetus refer to when he speaks of distinguishing ‘the analytical from the non-analytical’?

‘Now in the case of syllogisms I say: ‘Bring me any one you like ...’. We shall, I suppose, naturally take this to mean ‘Bring me any syllogism you like’.²³⁸ Hence Epictetus means that he can ‘distinguish analytical syllogisms from non-analytical syllogisms’.²³⁹ But this construal is faced by two difficulties. First, what is an ‘analytical’ syllogism? The phrase elsewhere occurs only in a late commentator on Aristotle; and the technical sense which it there bears could not have been intended by Epictetus.²⁴⁰ Perhaps we may guess a meaning for the word? Perhaps an ‘analytical’ syllogism is a syllogism which can be analysed? Then Epictetus will be referring to the capacity to judge which syllogisms can be analysed or reduced to the indemonstrables and which cannot.²⁴¹ But it is far from clear that the word can be understood in this sense; and it is far from clear that the sense is pertinent to the context.

Some scholars have scented corruption.²⁴² Thus instead of ‘ἀναλυτικός’, ‘ἀποδεικτός’ might commend itself²⁴³—at least, it states in an unpuzzling way the idea which ‘ἀναλυτικός’ could only state in a pointlessly puzzling way. But if emendation is needed, then I prefer something bolder: perhaps ‘συνακτικός’ or ‘περαντικός’. With such a word, Epictetus will be claiming a capacity to tell which syllogisms are valid and which are not; and such a claim—unlike a claim about demonstrability—provides the obvious parallel to the claim of the assayer.

But there is a second difficulty. In II iii Epictetus is interested in capacities for judging *people*; and in the case of syllogisms, he claims that he can ‘appraise those who succeed in syllogisms’²⁴⁴—that is to say, he can tell which of his pupils are decent logicians. Now if the ‘analytical’ items are syllogisms and the ‘successful’ items are students, then we shall have to ascribe to Epictetus—and ourselves make sense of—the following train of thought: ‘I can tell an analytical syllogism from a non-analytical

²³⁸ That is to say we shall read: ‘... φέρε δὲν [scilicet συλλογισμόν] θέλεις ...’.

²³⁹ So e.g. Oldfather.

²⁴⁰ Eustratius, in *APst* 2.25-27; 3.26-34: an ‘analytical’ syllogism is one in which the premisses are ‘more familiar to us’ and the conclusion ‘more familiar by nature’. The phrase, in other words, is closely tied to a particular thesis within Aristotle’s philosophy of science which finds no echo in Epictetus.

²⁴¹ Which syllogisms are *not* analytic in this putative sense? Evidently, at least the indemonstrables themselves. But perhaps Epictetus is also thinking of the so-called λόγοι ἀμέθοδως περαινόντες, although they are not strictly speaking συλλογισμοί (see Barnes [1990a], pp.65-83).

²⁴² Schenkl once conjectured ‘ἀνάλυτον’; Richards offered ‘ἀναποδεικτικόν’.

²⁴³ See e.g. Alexander, in *Met* 272.16-17: δέδεικται γὰρ ἐν τοῖς Ἀναλυτικοῖς τίνα τέ εἰσιν ἀποδεικτά καὶ τίνα οὐ.

²⁴⁴ The Greek is τῶν περὶ συλλογισμοὺς κατορθούντων, and I cannot convince myself that the participle might be neuter.

syllogism—after all, I can analyse syllogisms—and so I have the capacity which I need if I am going to distinguish good logic students from bad logic students’. I do not affirm that no sense can be squeezed out of this— but you will have to squeeze pretty hard.

Is there an alternative interpretation? Well, if Epictetus is claiming a capacity to tell who is and who is not a decent logician, then when he says ‘I will distinguish the analytical from the non-analytical, τὸν ἀναλυτικὸν τε καὶ μὴ’ he must mean ‘I will distinguish the man who can analyse [sc syllogisms] from the man who cannot’.²⁴⁵ This in turn has its difficulties. First, in the context—and given the parallel with the coins—it might seem impossible to construe ‘Bring me any one’ as ‘Bring me any *man*’ rather than as ‘Bring me any *syllogism*’. Secondly, as far as I am aware there is no other Greek text in which the word ‘ἀναλυτικός’ is used of a person.

There is little to say on the second point; but I suppose that it would not have been particularly difficult to understand ‘ἀναλυτικός’ as used of a person—after all ‘διαλεκτικός’ is regularly used of people. In any event, the word is no harder on this second interpretation than it is on the first.²⁴⁶ As to the first point, it is worth noting that the coins were introduced, in the anecdote about Diogenes, in an exquisitely arch fashion: Diogenes compared a student who wants to be recommended as a good man to a coin which might ask to be recommended as a genuine drachma. In the anecdote, the coin parallels the student. Hence in Epictetus’ rumination on the anecdote, the coin may continue to parallel the student—after ‘Bring me any coin’ we may, after all, interpret ‘Bring me any one’ as ‘Bring me anyone’.

All in all, I incline to the second interpretation. But it is not easy. Nor does it shed any light on Epictetus’ attitude to analysis.

§ I: Hypothetical arguments

On hypothetical arguments and changing arguments Epictetus provides more pabulum. The chief text is I vii.²⁴⁷ I shall reverse Epictetus’ order of discussion and start with hypotheses and hypothetical arguments.

The word ‘ὕποθεσις’ has a variety of uses in Greek philosophy of the period;²⁴⁸ and the term ‘hypothetical argument’ may describe more than one

²⁴⁵ That is to say we shall read: ‘... φέρε δὲ [scilicet ἄνθρωπον] θέλεις ...’—or rather, we shall take ‘δὲ’ to mean ‘whoever’. So Long, Laurenti, Carter/Hard. See Dio Chrysostom, xii 10, for a (distant) parallel to the idea.

²⁴⁶ And if we want an emendation to eke out the second interpretation? Why not ‘διαλεκτικός’?

²⁴⁷ See above, pp.61–62; below, Appendix.

²⁴⁸ See Barnes [1990b], pp.90–95; Freytag [1995], pp.122–129.

sort of syllogism. In one of its senses, the adjective ‘ὑποθετικός’ contrasts with ‘κατηγορικός’, and hypothetical arguments contrast with categorical arguments.²⁴⁹ In this sense of the word, all Stoic syllogisms are hypothetical. But when Epictetus speaks of hypothetical arguments in I vii and elsewhere he is evidently thinking of something more specific—of a special subclass of Stoic arguments.²⁵⁰

Chrysippus had written on hypotheses, and he had written at length on hypothetical arguments.²⁵¹ No fragment of these works has survived, and no Stoic *testimonium* incontrovertibly derives from them. Nonetheless, it is certain that Chrysippus did not mean to refer to all non-categorical syllogisms, certain (in other words) that he was thinking of a special type or form of Stoic argument—and it will then seem probable that Epictetus is referring to the same special sort of argument. What special sort? Various guesses come to mind.²⁵² One of them—which I find curiously attractive²⁵³—connects Chrysippus’ hypothetical arguments with a special sort of λεκτόν or sayable: the sort which the Stoics called a ‘hypothetical’, a ὑποθετικόν.²⁵⁴

Hypotheticals are sayables saying which we hypothesize something. They are canonically expressed by sentences of the form ‘Let it be supposed that [ὑποκεῖσθω] ...’. In uttering a sentence of the form ‘Let it be supposed that P’, I say something—and in particular, I hypothesize something: I hypothesize that P. A hypothesis is then either the act of making a hypothesis or else the content of the act—the item which I hypothesize. Hypotheticals in this sense of the word are distinguished from assertibles or ἀξιώματα. But although they are not assertibles, and hence are themselves neither true nor false, they will, I suppose, *contain* assertibles.²⁵⁵ The hypothetical ‘Suppose that the earth is spherical’ contains the assertible that the earth is spherical. In uttering the sentence ‘Suppose that the earth is spherical’, I will typically hypothesize something, namely

²⁴⁹ Above, p. 71.

²⁵⁰ Pace Schweighäuser [*1799], II p. 102.

²⁵¹ Diogenes Laertius, VII 196: the fourth group (σύνταξις) of the area concerned with arguments and schemata consists of one work, in three books, *On Hypotheses*, four works of or on hypothetical arguments, and one work in one book *On Exposition*. – On the value of the titles as evidence for Chrysippus see Barnes [1996].

²⁵² For example, that Chrysippus was dealing with what later logicians called ‘wholly hypothetical’ arguments—arguments all the components of which are complex propositions (on which see Barnes [1983]). Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1190–1198—but none of the passages which Hülser collects refers explicitly to the Stoics.

²⁵³ Susanne Bobzien made me aware of the attraction—in a paper due to appear in *Phronesis* for 1997 (and to which I am heavily indebted) she offers an account of Stoic hypothetical reasoning.

²⁵⁴ Texts on hypotheticals in Hülser [*1987], frags 897–908; see e.g. Schenkeveld [1984]. I should confess that no text explicitly connects Chrysippus with the ὑποθετικόν.

²⁵⁵ Just as oaths, though not themselves assertibles, contain assertibles: note the phrase ‘περιειλημμένα ἀξιώματα’ at Chrysippus, Λογ Ζητ x 9–10.

that the earth is spherical. I also and necessarily express the assertible that the earth is spherical—but I do not assert that the earth is spherical (or anything else).

Now hypotheticals may and do feature in arguments: 'Suppose that there is a highest prime number', you may say—and then start out on a *reductio ad impossibile*. Hence the Stoics will presumably have made a special study of hypothetical arguments, distinct from the study of standard syllogisms. ('Presumably': there is no express evidence for this—although we do happen to know that Chrysippus made a special study of imperative arguments.²⁵⁶)

Such speculations fit reasonably well with the Epictetan texts on hypothetical arguments. To be sure, Epictetus' hypothetical arguments do not employ—or do not only employ—the canonical form 'Let it be supposed that ...' in order to express a hypothetical. Rather, they prefer the form 'Let it be the case that [ἔστω] ...'; thus:

As we behave in hypothetical arguments, so should we behave in life. 'Let it be night [ἔστω νύξ].—Let it be so.—'Well then, is it day?'—No; for I accepted the hypothesis of its being night.—'Let it be the case that you take it to be night'.—Let it be the case.—'But take it that it is day.'²⁵⁷—That does not follow from²⁵⁸ the hypothesis. (I xxv 11-12: cf III xxii 68)

Thus we start a hypothetical argument by accepting a hypothesis, stated in the form 'Let it be the case that ...'.

Some Stoics distinguished between 'Let it be supposed that ...' and 'Let it be the case that ...', which standardly marks what they called an 'expositive' sayable or ἐκθετικόν. But expositives are found in only two of the several lists of 'complete sayables' which we possess; and it seems plausible to think that they were not generally distinguished from hypotheticals.²⁵⁹ I imagine that Epictetus regards 'Let it be the case that ...' as a permissible way of expressing a ὑποθετικόν. (Note that Sextus will use 'Let it be granted [δέδοσθω] ...' in the expression of a hypothesis: *M* III 17.) In any event, it is hard to see what logical significance the distinction

²⁵⁶ See e.g. Barnes [1984].

²⁵⁷ Reading 'ἡμέρα' (Trincavalli) for the transmitted 'νύξ' (Oldfather's intricate defence of the received text—[*1925], p.160 n.3—is unconvincing).

²⁵⁸ ἀκολουθεῖ: 'be consistent with' (Long, Oldfather) is tempting (cf e.g. II xvi 7 for 'ἀκολουθός' in the sense of 'coherent with'); but in the similar context at I xxvi 1 (below, p.90), 'ἀκολουθεῖν' must mean 'follow from'.

²⁵⁹ It is true that Chrysippus wrote both *Περὶ ὑποθέσεων* and also *Περὶ ἐκθέσεων* (Diogenes Laertius, VII 196), and this perhaps suggests that he had distinguished hypotheticals from expositives (see Frede [1974a], p.44). But the catalogue contains no reference to λόγοι ἐκθετικοί—and the position of the *Περὶ ἐκθέσεων* in the catalogue (at the end of the section on hypothetical arguments) perhaps intimates that exposition was regarded as a special kind of hypothesis. (Perhaps existential hypotheticals were called expositives?)

between a hypothetical and an expositive might have been thought to possess.

At this point two questions present themselves. First, how could there be such a thing as 'hypothetical logic'? And secondly, why should there be such a thing as 'hypothetical logic'?

Behind the first question there lies a banal truth. Logic is about one thing's following from another; and, in general, X follows from Y only if, given that Y is true, X too must be true. But hypotheticals are neither true nor false. How then can anything follow from a hypothetical? (And how can a hypothetical follow from anything else?) Moreover, the Stoics defined an argument or λόγος as a system of assertibles or ἀξιώματα;²⁶⁰ consequently, for the Stoics there can in principle be no hypothetical arguments—that is to say, no arguments some components of which are hypotheticals.

Now in fact it is not difficult to explain how, despite lacking a truth-value, a hypothetical might feature in an argument. Any hypothetical will be expressed by a sentence such as 'Suppose that P'. In such a sentence, the component marked by 'P' will express an assertible—something which can (and must) be either true or false. Hence why not say that something follows from a hypothetical insofar as it follows from the assertible contained in the hypothetical? From 'Suppose that P' we may infer 'Q' provided that, given that P, it follows that Q.

Thus we might imagine that the following schema is a schema for a hypothetical argument:

Suppose that P.

If P, then Q.

Therefore: Q.

But the conclusion might give us pause: if we start with a hypothetical, should we not also end with one and write the conclusion thus:

Therefore: suppose that Q?

Not, I think, according to Epictetus; at least the portion of text which I have cited from I xxv—

'Let it be night.'—Let it be so.—'Well then, is it day?'—No; for I accepted the hypothesis of its being night.

²⁶⁰ See below, pp.124-125.

—suggests that the ‘conclusion’ does not take the form of a hypothetical: we are being invited to infer that it is day; we are not being invited to make a second supposition. Hypotheticals may be starting-points of arguments: they may not be conclusions. And in fact there does seem to be something odd about an expression of the form ‘Therefore: suppose that Q’.

But in that case, what are we to make of the conclusion of the hypothetical argument? It is presumably an assertible if it is not a hypothetical; and in setting it down as the conclusion of an argument we shall presumably be asserting it. But evidently we may not want to assert it—we may suspect, or even know, that it is false, and neither the wise man nor the fool wants knowingly to make a false assertion. In any event, having made our hypothesis we want, so to speak, to stay in the hypothetical realm. And it seems that the assertible conclusion takes us out of that green and pleasant land.

The answer to this little puzzle can perhaps be found if we turn to the second of the two obstacles which seem to block the very existence of hypothetical logic. I think that we should take seriously the Stoic definition of an argument. From that definition it follows that the hypothetical argument which I have given is not an argument at all: indeed, no hypothetical arguments are arguments. The phrase ‘hypothetical argument’ no more picks out a type of argument than the phrase ‘decoy duck’ picks out a species of duck or the phrase ‘expectant mother’ picks out a subclass of the mothers of the world.²⁶¹ In producing a hypothetical argument you reason hypothetically. But any argument involved in your reasoning is a system of assertibles. Such an argument might have the form

P.
If P, then Q.
—
Therefore: Q.

In arguing hypothetically, I may produce an argument of this very form—but I produce it hypothetically; and I mark—or may mark—the fact by prefixing its first premiss, as I enunciate it, by ‘Suppose that ...’. In uttering the sentence ‘Suppose that P’, I thereby utter a sentence which expresses an assertible—but I do not thereby assert anything. And in uttering the following sentences ‘If P, then Q’ and ‘Q’, I again utter sentences which express assertibles. But again I do not assert anything; for the context of the utterance—the context marked by the initial ‘Suppose that P’—indicates that this particular utterance of a sentence expressing an assertible is not

²⁶¹ Note that, according to the Peripatetics, ‘wholly hypothetical syllogisms’ (above, n.252) are not syllogisms: e.g. Alexander, in *APr* 326.12-19.

itself an assertoric utterance.²⁶² Nor, in uttering the sentence ‘Therefore: Q’ do I thereby infer anything.

This observation may make hypothetical logic possible—but surely it also makes it threadbare? Surely hypothetical logic can be nothing more than a shadow of the standard logic of assertibles? The only difference between a piece of hypothetical argumentation and a corresponding piece of assertoric argumentation will be that in the former, but not in the latter, at least one of the premisses will be set down in the form ‘Suppose that P’. There cannot be any logical rules peculiar to hypothetical arguments; for there are no such arguments as hypothetical arguments. But in that case, why—how—speak of hypothetical logic at all?

Well, Epictetus invokes a few rules of hypothetical argumentation; and it may be worth seeing what they are before we dismiss the whole subject as a phantom. Thus

when someone was reading the hypotheticals, he said: ‘This too is a hypothetical rule [νόμος]—accept what follows from the hypothesis.’ (I xxvi 1)

A student was ‘reading the hypotheticals’—that is to say, I guess, he was reading a book entitled *The Hypotheticals* (perhaps even one of Chrysippus’ books)²⁶³—and he had ignored or misunderstood one of the rules for dealing with such arguments, the rule obliging you to accept the consequences of the hypothesis which you had provisionally adopted.

The hypothetical rule—as Epictetus states it—is not a law of logic;²⁶⁴ nor is it a rule of inference. It is not a statement that Y follows from X, nor

²⁶² Then what is it? If it is neither assertoric nor hypothetical, what else can it be? I can invent no answer to this question on the basis of the Stoic texts; but I am not inclined to think that it is a devastatingly difficult question to answer.

²⁶³ Bruns [1897], pp.9-10, argued that the student was reading out one of his own essays (so too Hijmans [1959], p.42 n.5, with further references). But Epictetus, having corrected—and embarrassed—the student, went on to blame ‘the one who had suggested the reading to him [τοῦ ὑποθεμένου αὐτῷ τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν]’. Presumably an assistant master (see I xxvi 13; cf iv 9 (?)) had told the student to read something he was not yet able to follow, and the student duly read it out to Epictetus: what he read was not his own composition.

²⁶⁴ Hence we do not find in this text an early (the earliest?) occurrence of the notion of a ‘law of logic’ (a ‘law of thought’). But I imagine that our text indicates the origin of the notion; for the term ‘νόμος’ will readily pass from the rule or convention of dialectical behaviour to the principle or general truth on which the rule is based (see below, n.285). – One of the Chrysippean works on hypothetical arguments bears the following title: Λόγοι ὑποθετικοὶ εἰς τοὺς νόμους (Diogenes Laertius, VII 196). Hadot [1994], p.348, translates this by ‘Arguments hypothétiques du point de vue de leurs lois’, and he adduces our Epictetan text for this use of ‘νόμος’. If Hadot is right, then the Epictetan usage goes back (at least) to Chrysippus. But his version of ‘εἰς τοὺς νόμους’ is strained. Rather translate: ‘Hypothetical arguments bearing on laws’. (Tempting to connect it with the celebrated argument ascribed to Diogenes the Cynic at Diogenes Laertius, VII 72, on which see Schofield [1991], pp.130-135.)

a permission to infer Y from X. Rather, it is a rule of acceptance, a rule obliging us to accept Y once we have hypothesized X. Hence it seems that there are, after all, special rules for hypothetical argumentation. But the rule is based upon a logical connection: we are to accept something if it follows from the hypothesis. In effect, then, the rule is the hypothetical counterpart of the first of the five Chrysippean indemonstrables.²⁶⁵ According to the indemonstrable, from a conditional assertible and its antecedent the consequent follows. According to the hypothetical rule, given that if P then Q, then if we have hypothesized that P we must accept that Q. (We must accept it, of course, in the context of the hypothetical argumentation—it would be absurd to imagine that we are saddled with it *tout court*.)

What other rules are there? I vii gives us the same rule as I xxvi and adds a mate:

Should we accept what follows from <a hypothesis> and not accept what conflicts [τὰ μᾶχόμενα]?—Yes. (§ 24)

That is to say, if you have hypothesized that P, then if ‘Q’ conflicts with ‘P’; then you must not accept ‘Q’. Ancient logic famously knew different analyses of conditional assertibles. According to one of those analyses—which is securely attributed to Chrysippus—‘a conditional is sound when the opposite of its consequent conflicts [μᾶχεται] with its antecedent’.²⁶⁶ Hence ‘Q’ conflicts with ‘P’ if and only if, if P, then not Q. Hence the two rules paired in § 24 can be put like this:

- (1) If you have hypothesized that P, then, given that if P, then Q, you must accept that Q.
- (2) If you have hypothesized that P, then, given that if P, then not Q, you must not accept that Q.

Perhaps we may think to find a third rule hinted at in §§ 24-25: Do not accept an impossible hypothesis.²⁶⁷ (But it is not clear whether Epictetus presents this as a rule of hypothetical argumentation, or simply as a sound piece of advice.) It is not in the least difficult to invent other hypothetical rules—for example, a rule corresponding to the second Chrysippean indemonstrable:

²⁶⁵ See above, n.227.

²⁶⁶ Sextus, *PH* II 111; see e.g. Frede [1974a], pp.82-91.

²⁶⁷ So, explicitly, Taurus, *apud* Philoponus, *aet mundi* 188.

(3) If you have hypothesized that P, then, given that if Q then not P, you must not accept that Q.

But I have not hit upon any other rules in the surviving texts.²⁶⁸

The thin and frail character of hypothetical logic makes the second of my two questions the more pressing: why be interested in hypothetical argumentation at all? Presumably Chrysippus thought that the question had an answer—otherwise he would hardly have written on the subject. Perhaps the question may best be approached by asking what the point and purpose of the hypothetical rules might be; that is to say, what is the aim of hypothetical argumentation? Is it merely a game—perhaps a serious game, a game which trains us in logic—or does it also have some more directly scientific purpose and value? Certain texts strongly suggest that Epictetus has in mind a sort of game—a logical exercise, similar to the ‘dialectical’ exercises which Aristotle describes in his *Topics*. Thus Epictetus asks: ‘Is it up to you to assume whatever hypothesis you want?’ (II xxix 39). The implied answer is: No. And it is tempting, if not mandatory, to infer that he is thinking of some form of intellectual gymnastics.²⁶⁹ But in any case—as Aristotle’s *Topics* may remind us—an exercise which is sometimes undertaken in gymnastic spirit may also have a more substantial philosophical or scientific purpose.

A linguistic turn seems to lead us in just such a serious direction. In a couple of the texts in which he refers to hypothetical arguments, Epictetus uses the verb ‘ἐφοδεύειν’ (III xxiv 78; IV iv 14). Outside logical contexts, the verb means ‘spy out’ or ‘reconnoitre’ (in a military context) or ‘chart’ or ‘explore’ (of a geographer). Such a word no doubt lends itself readily enough to metaphorical use; and a phrase such as ‘explore the hypothetical arguments’ is scarcely puzzling. Yet we might wonder if Epictetus had any particular reason to use it here.

Now the associated adverb, ‘ἐφοδευτικῶς’ makes a celebrated appearance in Sextus Empiricus.²⁷⁰ Sextus is explaining what the logicians

²⁶⁸ One of the titles in the Chrysippean catalogue is said to read thus in the MSS: Λόγοι ὑποθετικοὶ θεωρημάτων (Diogenes Laertius, VII 196). It is an odd phrase, and I suspect that it is corrupt. Perhaps it refers to a work on rules or principles (θεωρήματα) concerned with hypothetical argumentation?

²⁶⁹ You cannot say ‘Change the hypothesis’ (§ 39); you cannot say ‘Don’t offer me a tropic of this sort—offer me one of that sort’, nor can you say ‘Don’t infer this conclusion—infer that one’ (§ 40). Then what *can* you do? It sounds as though you simply listen to someone else producing an argument—and putting it down to your account. But that cannot be right. I take it that X gives Y some hypothesis to defend, the hypothesis that P. The rules do not allow Y to say ‘Give me the hypothesis that Q’. Then X offers Y the thought—say—that if P then Q. The rules do not allow Y to say ‘Offer me the thought that either P or R’. But Y is not, of course, obliged to *accept* the thought offered to him.

²⁷⁰ Eight appearances in Sextus (*PH* II 141-142; *M* VIII 307-309)—and never elsewhere, apparently, in surviving Greek. Nor is the adjective ‘ἐφοδευτικός’ ever found.

take to constitute a proof or ἀπόδειξις.²⁷¹ A proof is a special sort of argument or λόγος. To count as a proof, an argument must be valid, and ‘true’,²⁷² and ‘probative’ (insofar as its premisses present something clear and its conclusion something unclear). But such properties are not enough; for some arguments of the sort thus far delineated yield their conclusions ‘only in an exploratory fashion [ἐφοδευτικῶς] and not also in a revelatory fashion [ἐκκαλυπτικῶς]’ (*PH* II 141). A genuine proof ‘unveils’ or reveals its conclusion: it proceeds not only ἐφοδευτικῶς but also ἐκκαλυπτικῶς. Sextus does not explain the adverb ‘ἐφοδευτικῶς’, and neither does anyone else; but it seems plausible to infer that it was a technical term in logic—and probably in Stoic logic²⁷³—, and that it was used to discriminate proofs proper from other probative arguments.

It is tempting to connect Sextus’ rare adverb with Epictetus’ verb. Epictetus does not refer to people who explore hypothetical arguments in the sense of making a study of them. Rather, he refers to people who conduct such arguments; and the verb he chooses indicates that hypothetical arguments, although they do not constitute proofs, nevertheless are in principle probative arguments—that is to say, arguments which possess a certain epistemic value.

The suggestion has its attractions; but two reasons incline me to reject it. The first reason concerns the adverb. Arguments which are only exploratorily probative are nonetheless arguments, λόγοι; that is to say, according to Sextus in this context (see *PH* II 136), their component parts are assertibles or ἀξιώματα. And there is no hint at all in Sextus that the distinction between merely probative arguments and proofs runs parallel to the distinction between hypotheticals and assertibles. What precisely the Sextan distinction amounts to is obscure and controversial—it appears that in a genuine proof at least one of the premisses must be derived from a preconception or πρόληψις, that it must be a conceptual truth.²⁷⁴ But however that may be, there is no whiff of hypotheticals in the text.

Secondly, Epictetus uses the verb ‘ἐφοδεύειν’ in other texts where there is no question of probative arguments. Thus at II xxi 21 he urges us to ‘explore [ἐφοδεύειν]’ our impressions; and earlier, in § 17, he asks ‘Do you not explore [ἐφοδεύετε] the premisses of the Liar, the hypothetical arguments?’. In neither of these passages can the verb be associated with

²⁷¹ *PH* II 135-143; *M* VIII 301-314 (cf 411-428): see Brunschwig [1980]; Ebert [1991], pp.232-279.

²⁷² I.e. its premisses (and hence its conclusion) must be true: see below, p.102.

²⁷³ On the origins of the definition see Brunschwig [1980], who opts for the Stoics (with subtle discriminations among different versions of the definition); Ebert [1991], pp.287-310, who thinks of ‘the Dialecticians’, i.e. of Diodorus Cronus and his crew. Whatever the origins of the thing may have been, it is clear that Sextus regards it as common property of ‘the logicians’—among whom he certainly includes both Stoics and Peripatetics.

²⁷⁴ Note ‘προειληφθαι’, *PH* II 142.

the technical Sextan adverb; and in the second passage it is connected with hypothetical arguments. Moreover, the verb is not uncommon outside Epictetus: the general idea which, in its metaphorical use, it conveys is the idea of going about something methodically or systematically—thus it can be used to mean ‘survey’ or ‘go through’ a set of considerations,²⁷⁵ ‘carry out’ an inquiry or investigation,²⁷⁶ ‘set out’ an argument or proof,²⁷⁷ and even ‘argue’.²⁷⁸ In other words, Epictetus’ use of ‘ἐφοδεύειν’ is not striking and requires no particular explanation—certainly, it will not help us to understand the nature or the aim of hypothetical argument.

Then let us turn to the main text, I vii 22-29. It divides into two subsections and discusses two distinguishable issues. Epictetus declares that these issues arise because ‘it is sometimes necessary to postulate some hypothesis as a sort of base for the argument which follows’ (§ 22). Why and in what circumstances is it ‘necessary to postulate some hypothesis’? Epictetus cannot mean—the context excludes the idea—that sometimes the rules of the game require you to make a hypothesis. Rather, he means that sometimes you cannot avoid arguing from a hypothesis. When and why not?

Well, at any point in a serious argument you may say ‘Let us suppose that ...’—sometimes for exploratory reasons, sometimes for a *reductio*.²⁷⁹ But this is not the only use for such hypothetical expressions, nor (I think) is it the use which Epictetus here has in mind. Rather, he is alluding to the commonplace that ‘not everything can be proved’;²⁸⁰ that is to say, it is a commonplace that sometimes, when you have proved a theorem in ethics or in physics, you cannot further prove the premisses on which that proof was based—rather, you have argued ‘from first principles’, from items which cannot themselves be proved.

If you cannot prove first principles, what can you do with them? Well, according to one view, you must *postulate* the principles; or, equivalently, the principles must be laid down as hypotheses. Thus hypothetical arguments will—sometimes at least—be highly serious things. For every scientific proof will depend on a hypothesis, either directly (if its premisses are axioms or first principles) or else indirectly (if its premisses are

²⁷⁵ E.g. Sextus, *PH* I 200, 209.

²⁷⁶ See e.g. Sextus, *M* VIII 222; VI 6.

²⁷⁷ See e.g. Sextus, *M* VIII 283; Alexander, in *Met* 166.19.

²⁷⁸ See e.g. Alexander, in *Met* 125.2-4. – Other words of the family—‘περιοδεύειν’ (e.g. III xv 7; Philodemus, *sign* xvii 32), ‘διεξοδεύειν’ (e.g. Sextus, *PH* II 202, 227-228)—are familiar from other philosophical contexts.

²⁷⁹ For hypotheses in *reductio* arguments see e.g. Alexander, in *APr* 24.12-19; cf Barnes *et al* [*1991], p.77 n.148.

²⁸⁰ A commonplace—and also a truth? It is true that, in any axiomatised system (in any ‘science’) there are some propositions which are not proved; it is not evidently true that there are some propositions which are not proved in any axiomatised system. See Barnes [1993d].

themselves derived theorems). And in that case, the axioms of each science are perhaps most honestly presented by way of sentences of the form 'Let it be supposed that ...'; and thus arguments involving such axioms are, trivially, hypothetical arguments.

Given that we must sometimes postulate hypotheses, what difficulties does the postulant face? Epictetus asks: 'Should we concede all hypotheses we are given or not all? And if not all, which?' (§ 23). He does not offer an explicit answer. I xxix 39-41, which I have already cited, suggests that we have no choice in our hypotheses: we must accept what we are given and argue from it as best we can.²⁸¹ Now it is plausible enough to suppose that in a game or exercise in hypothetical argumentation you were obliged to stick by whatever hypothesis you were given; and the terminology of our text—in which you are *given* hypotheses rather than choose them—perhaps suggests the context of an intellectual game. But this cannot be right: in I vii Epictetus is talking of the Sage's life, not of the student's preparatory exercises. The question 'Are all or only some hypotheses to be accepted?' is evidently not a question about the rules of a game, and Epictetus clearly implies, first, that we should *not* accept all hypotheses, and secondly, that it is not an easy matter to determine which we should accept.

The Pyrrhonian sceptics objected to reasoning based on hypotheses: such reasoning, they urged, can never accomplish anything, since any choice of hypothesis must always be arbitrary. Hypotheses are, by definition, items which are simply postulated: they are not—they cannot be—supported by argument or based upon reasons; they are, so the Pyrrhonists put it, 'bare affirmations'; and there is, in a literal sense, nothing whatever to be said for any hypothesis. Suppose, then, that you hypothesize that P, in the hope of drawing some interesting consequences from it. I will proceed to hypothesize that not P (or that Q, where 'Q' is any proposition incompatible with 'P'); and I will draw appropriate consequences from my hypothesis. The results of my reasoning are no better and no worse than the results of yours; for my hypothesis is no better and no worse than yours—no hypothesis *can* be better or worse than any other hypothesis. Hence no hypothetical argument can show anything. And if all scientific reasoning is ultimately based on hypotheses, no scientific reasoning has any probative value.²⁸²

'Should we accept all hypotheses we are offered or not all?'—If we are offered a choice among P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n , we can give no particular reason for picking any P_i ; for precisely insofar as we are giving a reason, we are no longer making a hypothesis. Hence, it seems, we should accept either every

²⁸¹ See above, p.29.

²⁸² Texts: Sextus, *PH* I 173-174; *M* VIII 369-378; III 1-17; discussed by Barnes [1990b], pp.100-112; Freytag [1995], pp.115-160.

P_i or none. And since we evidently cannot accept every P_i we had better accept none. That is to say, we had better reject all hypotheses and abjure hypothetical argumentation.

Whatever the ultimate merit of this sceptical consideration, it possesses an initial charm; and at the very least it poses a challenge to the advocates of hypothetical argument. If such argument is to be more than a flexing of the logical biceps, then we must know which hypotheses it is right to accept, and why it is right to accept them. I think that this is the issue to which Epictetus alludes in § 23.²⁸³ The allusion implies that the issue was standardly discussed within the ambit of Stoic logical theory; and perhaps it insinuates that there were standard answers, or at least standard gestures towards an answer. But Epictetus offers no hint as to what those answers were.

The second question which I vii raises about hypothetical argumentation concerns not its starting point but its development.²⁸⁴

And once we have conceded a hypothesis, should we stand by the concession come what may, or should we sometimes renounce it? Should we accept what follows from it and not accept what conflicts?—Yes.—But someone says: ‘I’ll bring it about that, having accepted a hypothesis of something possible, you are led on to an impossibility.’ (§§ 24-25)

The situation appears to be this. Suppose that it is possible that P ; and that you have accepted, as a hypothesis, that P . Then—by the rules of hypothetical argumentation—you must accept that Q if, given that P , it follows that Q . But now someone tells you that you must accept that Q —even though, in this particular case, it is impossible that Q . You have followed the rules of hypothetical argumentation—and you are snared. What are you to do?²⁸⁵

²⁸³ The date of the sceptical argument which I have just rehearsed is not certain; but it goes back at least to Agrippa (a sceptic of unknown date—but between Aenesidemus and Sextus: see Caujolle-Zaslowsky [1989]); and something like it was developed far earlier—note the reference to Timon at Sextus, *M* III 2. In any case, it was surely around before Epictetus taught.

²⁸⁴ Note the Chrysippean titles: Λύσις τῶν Ἠδύλου ὑποθετικῶν β' (Diogenes Laertius, VII 196); Λύσις τῶν Ἠδύλου ὑποθετικῶν πρὸς Ἀριστοκρέοντα καὶ Ἀπολλᾶν α' (197); and the spurious Λύσις τῶν Ἀλεξάνδρου ὑποθετικῶν γ' (196). Evidently, there were—Chrysippus thought that there were—difficulties to resolve.

²⁸⁵ Note the parallel case in Aulus Gellius, XVI ii: there is a ‘law of logic’, *lex disciplinae dialecticae* (see above, n.264), which requires a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No’ in answer to any question (§§ 1-2). You are asked ‘Have you stopped committing adultery?’, and if you follow the rule you are snared (§§ 4-7). So, generally, with sophisms patterned on the Horned Man (§§ 8-12: above, n.212). Hence a rider is normally added to the law of logic: ‘But do not answer captious questions’ (§ 13). – Gellius is not here referring to hypothetical reasoning, and his ‘law’ is plainly a rule of procedure for an intellectual game. But the parallel to the hypothetical snare is evident.

In general, 'we must learn how someone, having accepted a hypothesis, will not be led into an absurdity' (III ii 17). In the particular case here, it might be thought that the absurdity is pretty easy to avoid: you should simply reply 'Pull the other one'. For presumably Epictetus is imagining a student being confused by an unscrupulous sophist—or by a probing teacher. (So that the second issue concerning hypothetical arguments arises only in the context of logical gymnastics.) A student must be armed against such people—he must learn a little elementary modal logic. After all, if it is possible that P, and if, given that P, it follows that Q, then it is possible that Q. That is a plain truth of modal logic—a truth known to Aristotle.²⁸⁶ Hence if it is possible that P, and if someone tells you that it follows that Q, where it is impossible that Q, then you can be sure that he is wrong. Either it is in fact possible that Q (though it may not seem so), or it is after all impossible that P (despite initial appearances), or else, given that P, it does not follow that Q. The issue raised in §§ 23-24 is rather easy to deal with.

Yet Epictetus suggests that it is a difficult issue—the Sage must be prepared to argue with the man who produces impossible rabbits from possible hats; and this shows that Epictetus, once again, is not thinking of student gymnastics. Perhaps, then, he has in mind serious masters of sophistry, reasoners whose fallacies are so subtle and so persuasive that only a Sage can resist them? The reference to sophisms in § 26 supports such a conjecture. But I doubt if it is correct. For we know—thanks in part to Epictetus himself—of one philosopher who explicitly maintained that, in some circumstances, an impossible consequence might be validly drawn from a possible premiss. The philosopher was Chrysippus, who, in discussing the Master Argument, expressly denied that 'the impossible does not follow from the possible'.²⁸⁷

That is to say, Chrysippus maintained something like the following thesis: for some values of 'P' and 'Q', all of the following three claims are true: (1) it is possible that P; (2) given that P, it follows that Q; (3) it is impossible that Q. One of his illustrations concerns a moribund Dio. According to Chrysippus, (1') it is possible that Dio has died; (2') given that Dio has died, it follows that this man has died (where 'this man' refers to Dio); (3') it is not possible that this man has died. Alexander, observing that Aristotle had already proved that (1)-(3) are mutually inconsistent, remarks that Chrysippus, ignoring Aristotle's proof,

tried to prove that it is not so by certain examples which are not soundly constructed. He says that in the conditional

²⁸⁶ See *APr* 34a5-7.

²⁸⁷ II xix 5 (above, p.76); and see Hülser [*1987], frags 992-997; see e.g. Frede [1974a], pp.115-117; Mignucci [1978]; Bobzien [1986], pp.105-116; Ide [1992]; Gaskin [1995], pp.297-305.

If Dio has died, this man [οὗτος] has died
 —which is true when Dio is pointed at—the antecedent
 Dio has died
 is possible insofar as it is possible that it should sometime be true that Dio has died; but
 This man has died
 is impossible. For if Dio is dead, then the assertible
 This man has died
 perishes [φθείρεσθαι], the item which is pointed to no longer existing. (*in APr* 177.26-32)

The sentence ‘This man has died’ expresses an assertible only if the deictic phrase ‘This man’ refers to something. Once Dio is dead, ‘This man’ no longer points to anything: it cannot point to Dio, since Dio, being dead, is no longer a man and thus cannot be pointed to by ‘This man’; and it cannot—in the imagined context—point to anything else. Hence the sentence expresses no assertible. Hence, if you like, the assertible which it once expressed has ‘perished’.

We cannot suppose that some other sentence might now be appropriate to express this assertible—what other sentence could possibly be more appropriate than the sentence ‘This man has died’? We cannot suppose that the assertible continues to possess whatever sort of being assertibles possess but that it has ceased to be expressible—for there can be no assertibles which are not in principle expressible. Thus you cannot truly say that this man has died. The assertible, that this man has died, is an impossible assertible. And (perhaps) it is impossible that this man has died.

Chrysippus’ view is heterodox—by ancient as well as by modern canons of modal logic. But it was apparently an integral part of his logic, not an aside or a joke made in the course of a dialectical debate. Epictetus knew about his heterodox view, and it seems to me plain that he alludes to it in I vii. The skilful interlocutor in § 25 is not an unscrupulous sophist: rather, he is a Chrysippean logician.

Epictetus implies that this Chrysippean view was still discussed; and he insinuates that it was taken to raise difficult problems. Alas, he gives no hint as to how a Sage might set out to solve or to skirt those problems.

§ J: Changing arguments

Changing arguments, λόγοι μεταπίπτοντες, are mentioned in two titles in the catalogue of Chrysippus' logical works—but both titles are marked as spurious.²⁸⁸ Sextus Empiricus preserves what is generally taken to be an example of a changing argument (*PH* II 231, 234). There are no other surviving references to changing arguments outside the pages of Epictetus. It is evident from the *Discourses* that the study of such arguments was a fixed part of Stoic logic in the imperial period. Yet apart from the *Discourses* nothing suggests that the things had any particular importance in Stoicism or aroused any particular interest among the Stoics.

What are changing arguments? No text offers us a formal definition—or even a rough characterization. But presumably changing arguments are to be connected with a more familiar feature of Stoic logic, changing assertibles or ἀξιώματα μεταπίπτοντα.²⁸⁹ Changing assertibles are assertibles which change their truth-value, assertibles which are now true and now false. There is nothing inherently scandalous about such an idea. Those modern philosophers who treat truth as a predicate of sentences are happy enough with changing truth-values. The sentence 'It is Monday', for example, changes its truth-value with monotonous regularity: it is true every Monday, and false on every other day of the week.

Moreover, change of truth-value may be regarded as a special case of a more general sentential phenomenon. Just as 'It is Monday' has different truth-values at different times, so 'I am a pipe-smoker' has different truth-values in different mouths; 'This is a cultural desert' has different truth-values in different places; and so on. In general, when speaking of the truth-value of sentences, we shall use such formulae as 'Sentence S is true (or: false) when produced by utterer U, at time t, in place p, ...'. And it is plain that one and the same sentence may be true when uttered by U at t in p ..., false when uttered by U* at t* in p*, ... (or by U at t* in p, ..., or by U* at t in p, ..., and so on).

The 'propositions' which feature in most versions of propositional logic—the Ps and Qs of the standard propositional calculus—do not and cannot change their truth-value: they are true or false once and for all. (And everywhere or nowhere, in every mouth or in no mouth, ...) That is to say, propositions accept the 'absolute' operators 'It is true that ...' and 'It is

²⁸⁸ Diogenes Laertius, VII 195-196: Περὶ τῶν μεταπίπτοντων λόγων πρὸς Ἀθηναῖον α' (ψευδεπίγραφον), Λόγοι μεταπίπτοντες πρὸς τὴν μεσότητα γ' (ψευδεπίγραφον). The works must have been in the Chrysippean canon by the first century B.C. when Apollonius of Tyre drew up his Stoic Πίναξ, from which the catalogue in Diogenes presumably derives (see Goulet [1989b]; Barnes [1996]). We have no idea why Apollonius athetized the two works, nor whether his athetization was reasonable.

²⁸⁹ See Alexander, *apud* Simplicius, in *Phys* 1299.36-1300.11; Diogenes Laertius, VII 76. Cf e.g. Frede [1974a], pp.44-48; Bobzien [1986], pp.21-39; Denyer [1988].

false that ...', and not the 'relativised' predicates '... is true when uttered by U at t in p ...' and '... is false when uttered by U at t in p ...'. So Stoic assertibles look more like modern sentences than like modern propositions.

But Stoic assertibles are sayables: they are not sentences. They are what we can assert by uttering a sentence, not what we utter when asserting something. On the other hand, Stoic assertibles change their truth-value: they are not propositions. To the modern eye they may therefore seem monstrous hybrids, half sentence and half proposition. In the ancient world, they were perfectly familiar denizens of the logical jungle.²⁹⁰ (And it may be suspected that they are perfectly familiar today, outside the zoological gardens of the logicians.²⁹¹) On Monday I utter the sentence 'It is Monday', and on Tuesday I utter the very same sentence, 'It is Monday'. On each occasion I have expressed one and the same Stoic assertible, and I have in all probability asserted one and the same thing—namely, that it is Monday. On Monday what I asserted was true, on Tuesday what I asserted—that very same thing—was false. What I asserted, the assertible which I expressed, changed its truth-value.

It follows that it is absurd to urge that we should always stick to our judgements: if I want to think and speak truly about the date, I must change my mind seven times a week. And one text appears to indicate that Epictetus saw the point. A friend of his had decided to starve himself to death. Epictetus visited him:

'I have decided', he said.—Still, what was it that persuaded you? For if you judged rightly, we'll sit down and work together to get you out of the world. But if you judged irrationally, change your mind.—'One should stick by one's decisions.'—What on earth do you mean, my friend?—'Not all decisions, but those rightly made'.—And if you have recently felt that it is night, then if that is your opinion do not change it—stick by it and say that one should stick by one's judgements.²⁹²

Respect for the truth requires us to change our minds: if you have recently judged, and correctly, that it is night, it is folly to stick by your judgement—for if you go on believing that it is night, you will be wrong half the time.

Epictetus, it seems, is implicitly rejecting—or at least modifying—a standard Stoic doctrine, the doctrine that 'unchangingness [ἀμεταπτοσία] and constancy in judgements is a very great good' (Plutarch, *comm not* 1061E). But, alas, this is not what Epictetus means. It emerges from § 14

²⁹⁰ The classic paper is Hintikka [1967].

²⁹¹ 'The real axiom of Identity is this: *What is true in one context is true in another*. Or, if any truth is stated so that a change of events will make it false, then it is not a genuine truth at all. To most readers this axiom, I have little doubt, will seem a false statement' (F.H. Bradley, *The Principles of Logic* (London, 1883), p.133). I cite the passage for the last sentence, not for the horrors which precede it.

²⁹² I xv 6-7—I have changed the standard punctuation.

that he is simply urging his friend not to stick by judgements which turn out to be false. If he recently judged that it was night, then his judgement was false—and so of course he should be prepared to abandon it, even if it was 'rightly made'. (And 'rightly' here means 'well-groundedly', not 'truly'—perhaps he had dozed off and woke up suddenly in a darkened room.) The point concerns intellectual pig-headedness, not the subtleties of changing truth-values.

Nonetheless, it is plain that if it is sometimes the case that P and sometimes the case that not P, then you should change your judgements as the assertible changes its truth-value. I assume that the Stoic doctrine of 'unchangingness' must have recognized this fact. I know of no text which indicates how the Stoics accommodated it.

If assertibles change their truth-value, that is because they contain what are called 'indexical' elements—elements whose reference depends on context and circumstance. If I utter the sentence 'It is Monday' and thereby say that it is Monday, then there is an element in the assertible which corresponds to the verb 'is' (or rather, to the tense of the verb 'is'): on Mondays this element picks out Monday, and on Tuesdays the same element picks out Tuesday. Now verbs—tenses of verbs—are not the only sentential elements which are in this sense indexical: pronouns ('I', 'you', 'he', ...), and demonstrative phrases ('This duck', 'That argument', ...), are also indexical. If assertibles contain elements which correspond to tenses, it is easy to imagine that they will also contain elements which correspond to other indexical items in the sentences which express them. Thus if, say, I utter the sentence 'I am a pipe-smoker' and you utter the same sentence 'I am a pipe-smoker', we might suspect that, on the Stoic view, you and I would say one and the same thing, express one and the same assertible. And, in virtue of the indexical element in the assertible, what is said may be true in my mouth and false in yours. In general, if a sentence S is true relative to U at t in p ..., the Stoic assertible which S expresses (or so we might suppose) will be liable to vary its truth-value according to the identity of U and t and p and ...

But this was not the Stoic view. Rather, the Stoics thought that when I utter the sentence 'I am a pipe-smoker' I may say that Barnes is a pipe-smoker, whereas when you utter the same sentence you will say something different. It is not that we have a single assertible with different truth-values in different mouths: rather, there are two distinct assertibles which happen to be expressible by one and the same sentence. It is not easy to give a clear and precise account of the matter: the texts are meagre, their interpretation disputable. It is a plausible conjecture that Stoic assertibles contain indexical elements corresponding to the tenses of verbs and to other temporally indexical items—'today', 'now', 'a long time ago', 'in the past',

and the like; and that they do not contain indexical elements corresponding to other linguistic indexicals. But no ancient text says that this is so—let alone explains why it should have been taken to be so.

However that may be, it is plain that for the Stoics—as for all ancient philosophers—the primary truth-bearers may change their truth-value. Not all assertibles, of course, *can* change their truth-value. Whenever and wherever anyone utters (in favourable circumstances) the sentence ‘ $2 + 2 = 4$ ’, what he says is true; and whenever and wherever anyone utters (in favourable circumstances) the sentence ‘ $2 + 2 = 5$ ’ what he says is false. There are also assertibles which can in principle change their truth-value but which in practice do not do so. If throughout your life you never experience the sublime pleasure of a pipe of Dunhill Standard, then the assertible which you may express by uttering the sentence ‘I am smoking a pipe of Dunhill Standard’ will always be false—even though, in a better world, it might sometimes have been true. The Stoic nomenclature, ‘ἀξιώματα μεταπίπτοντα’, has suggested that changing assertibles are assertibles which actually do change their truth-value rather than assertibles which in principle can change their truth-value;²⁹³ but it would be imprudent to attach much weight to this.

Stoic arguments are defined as ‘systems’ or ordered sets of assertibles.²⁹⁴ Hence if an assertible changes its truth-value, we shall imagine that such a change will have some sort of effect on any argument in which it makes an appearance. But what precisely are we to understand by a changing *argument*?

Well, inasmuch as assertibles are called ‘changing’ because they change their truth-value, why not suppose that arguments were called ‘changing’ when they change *their* truth-value? Admittedly, modern logicians fight shy of applying the word ‘true’ to arguments; but the Stoics had no such inhibitions: rather, they said that an argument was true if and only if it was valid and all its premisses were true.²⁹⁵ In that case, an argument might change its truth-value for either of two (non-exclusive) reasons: it might change in validity, or its premisses might change their truth-value.

How might an argument be now valid and now invalid? Such a change can readily be explained in terms of change of truth-value; for according to the Stoics, an argument is valid if and only if the conditional formed from the conjunction of its premisses as antecedent and its conclusion as consequent is true. That is to say, an argument of the form ‘ A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n ; therefore B ’ is valid if and only if the conditional assertible ‘If (A_1 and A_2 and ... and A_n), then B ’ is true.²⁹⁶ Then if the corresponding conditional

²⁹³ So Bobzien [1986], p.124 n.14; *contra* Frede [1974a], p.44.

²⁹⁴ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1038-1049.

²⁹⁵ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1064-1079.

²⁹⁶ Texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1058-1073.

changes its truth-value, the argument will change its validity: it will be valid when the conditional is true, invalid when the conditional is false.

Now, as I have said, not all assertibles change—or can change—their truth-value; and although some conditional assertibles were certainly supposed to change their truth-value, it might be doubted that the conditional assertible corresponding to an argument can do so. Whether or not it can will depend, of course, on the nature of the connective in the corresponding conditional. There were different accounts of conditional assertibles current in the ancient world.²⁹⁷ Consider, say, the assertible expressed by the sentence

If Barnes is smoking his pipe, Geneva is in France:

if we apply a ‘Philonian’ account of conditionals, according to which a conditional is true at a time *t* if and only if it is not the case that its antecedent is true at *t* and its consequent false at *t*, then this assertible will be true whenever I happen not to be smoking and false at all other times. In fact, it changes its truth value about ten times a day.

An example of this sort is ascribed to the Stoics by Alexander: ‘If Dio is alive, Dio will be alive’.

Even if this is true now, inasmuch as it begins with a truth, ‘Dio is alive’, and ends in a truth, ‘He will be alive’, nonetheless there will be a time when, the further assumption [πρόσληψις], ‘But Dio is alive’, being true, the conditional will change to being false; for there will be a time when, ‘Dio is alive’ still being true, ‘He will be alive’ will not be true, and if this is not true then the conditional as a whole changes and becomes false—it is not always the case that when ‘Dio is alive’ is true so too is ‘Dio will be alive’; for in that case Dio would be immortal. (Alexander, *apud* Simplicius, in *Phys* 1300.1-8)

Insofar as he refers to a ‘further assumption’ Alexander suggests that the conditional in question is being treated as a premiss in an argument. But it is not the conditional which corresponds to the argument itself.

Moreover, Alexander plainly takes the conditional à la Philo; and it seems clear that the conditional assertibles which correspond to arguments are not to be construed à la Philo. Rather, they are to be construed in the Chrysippean fashion and explained in terms of ‘connectedness’ or συνάπτησις; that is to say, ‘If *P*, then *Q*’ is true if and only if the contradictory of ‘*Q*’ ‘conflicts’ with ‘*P*’.²⁹⁸ Can any Chrysippean conditionals change their truth-value? We could answer this question if we knew what ‘conflict’ was supposed to be; but we do not.²⁹⁹ And although I

²⁹⁷ Above, p.91: texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 952-965; see e.g. Frede [1974a], pp.80-93.

²⁹⁸ See above, p.91.

²⁹⁹ For a guess see e.g. Stopper [1983].

incline to think that Chrysippean conditionals probably could in principle change their truth-value, this is only a guess.

However that might be, it seems to me that the Stoics ought to have discussed the possibility of an argument's changing its validity. (And for all we know, they actually did so.)

It is far easier to see how an argument might change its truth-value in the second way—in virtue of a change in the truth-value of one or more of its premisses. The text I have cited from Alexander implies just such an argument—and I guess that Alexander was drawing on a Stoic discussion of changing arguments. Or consider the following syllogism:

If it's Monday, it's not Tuesday.

It's Monday.

Therefore: it's not Tuesday.

The second premiss of this argument is true on Mondays, false on any other day of the week. Hence the argument is true on Mondays, false on any other day of the week, since only on Mondays are all of its premisses true. There are one or two hints that the Stoics considered such things;³⁰⁰ and I do not see why they should not have called them 'changing arguments'.

The conditional corresponding to an argument might, in principle, change its truth-value. A premiss of an argument might, in principle, change its truth-value. And there is a third possibility which might as well be mentioned: one of the component assertibles of an argument might change. Any argument a premiss of which changes truth-value is an argument a component of which changes truth-value. But not *vice versa*; for the component assertible which changes its truth-value need not be a premiss of the argument. Consider the following argument:

If either it is Monday or Frege wrote *Begriffsschrift*, then there was at least one German logician.

Frege wrote *Begriffsschrift*.

Therefore: there was at least one German logician.

The assertible expressed by the sentence 'It is Monday' changes its truth-value. But no premiss in the argument changes its truth value, nor does the argument itself change its truth-value. Nonetheless, it might seem not unreasonable to refer to an argument as changing if one of its components changed truth-value.

³⁰⁰ See the text of Alexander; and note e.g. Sextus, *PH* II 139 (an argument is said to be false 'while it is day'); *M* VIII 418 (similarly).

When Epictetus talks of changing arguments in I vii, he has in mind something rather more specific than any of the characterizations I have thus far given. In § 20 he enjoins us to ‘consider premisses [λήμματα] ... and their alterations and changes as a result of which, in the very process of questioning or answering or inferring or whatever, they undergo changes’. The phrase is not pellucid; but it is clear that the changing arguments to which Epictetus alludes in I vii change insofar as their premisses change truth-value and do so *in the course of* the argument— that is to say, while the premisses are being propounded, while they are being accepted, while the conclusion is being drawn, and the like.³⁰¹ Changing arguments—or at least, the changing arguments to which Epictetus draws attention in I vii—are so-called in virtue of the fact that one or more of their premisses change truth-value in a particular way.³⁰²

How might an argument change in this particular way? Consider again my earlier example:

If it's Monday, it's not Tuesday.
It's Monday.

Therefore: it's not Tuesday.

Suppose that I propound the argument very late on Monday evening. I begin with the first premiss at 11.59, and—speaking in a slow drawl—I produce the conclusion just after midnight has chimed. The first premiss is always true. The second premiss was true when I propounded it; but it became false by the time I arrived at the conclusion. Perhaps, then, this is a simple example of what Epictetus is here thinking of as a changing argument?

Such an argument changes in the course of being propounded, and it does so in virtue of the second of the two ways in which an argument can change its truth-value—it does so in virtue of a change in the truth-value of the premisses. This suggests that we might add two other potential sorts of changing argument to the sort which Epictetus has delineated: first, arguments which, in the course of being propounded, change their validity; and secondly, arguments which, in the course of being propounded, suffer a change in truth-value of one of their component assertibles.

However that may be, it may be wondered whether my sample argument is really an example of what Epictetus has in mind. And at any rate we can—and may as well—introduce a distinction here, whether or not it contributes to the understanding of Epictetus' text. My sample argument

³⁰¹ On the idea of a change ‘in the course of the argument’ see below, p.125.

³⁰² Frede [1974a], p.48, takes this to be the defining feature of changing arguments; *contra* Bobzien [1986], p.127 n.27.

sometimes, but not always, changes—or rather, it will change while being propounded in certain circumstances, but it will not change while being propounded in all circumstances. Perhaps Epictetus is thinking not of such contingently changing arguments, but rather of arguments which change in whatever circumstances they are propounded? We shall shortly see that there are examples of such things to hand. And so we may introduce a further kind of changing argument, again with three varieties: first, arguments which, whenever they are propounded, change their validity; secondly, arguments which, whenever they are propounded, suffer a change in the truth-value of one or more of their premisses; and thirdly, arguments which, whenever they are propounded, suffer a change in the truth-value of one of their component assertibles.

Let me summarize: we may distinguish arguments which

- (I) for some period or other
 - (a) are valid at one time in that period and invalid at another, *or*
 - (b) have at least one premiss which is true at one time in that period and false at another, *or*
 - (c) contain at least one assertible which is true at one time in that period and false at another;
- (II) for some period during which they are being propounded
 - (a) are valid at one time in that period and invalid at another, *or*
 - (b) have at least one premiss which is true at one time in that period and false at another, *or*
 - (c) contain at least one assertible which is true at one time in that period and false at another;
- (III) for any period during which they are being propounded
 - (a) are valid at one time in that period and invalid at another, *or*
 - (b) have at least one premiss which is true at one time in that period and false at another, *or*
 - (c) contain at least one assertible which is true at one time in that period and false at another.

Epictetus is thinking of arguments which meet condition (II)(b) or perhaps condition (III)(b). Perhaps the Stoics limited the term ‘changing argument’ to arguments which meet one or other of these conditions—or perhaps they used the term more generously to cover several, or even all, of the arguments I have characterized.

Why should changing arguments seem puzzling or perturbing? According to Epictetus

there are cases in which we have soundly granted the premisses and such-and-such results from them: although it is false, nonetheless it results. (I vii 13)

That is to say, there are arguments which are plainly valid, in which all the premisses are true, and of which the conclusion is false. And there is the paradox; for a valid argument with true premisses must surely—and trivially—have a true conclusion.³⁰³

Sextus, as I have said, offers us what is generally taken as an example—the only surviving ancient example—of a changing argument.³⁰⁴ He is discussing sophisms, and he says that, according to the logicians,³⁰⁵ ‘a sophism is a plausible and treacherous argument leading one to accept a conclusion which is either false or similar to something false or unclear or in some other way unacceptable’ (*PH* II 229).³⁰⁶ The four types of conclusion in effect distinguish four types of sophism, and Sextus next gives an example of each. The argument which concerns me here illustrates the third type, the type which leads to an unclear conclusion.

A little later Sextus remarks, opaquely enough, that ‘inference [ἀπαγωγή] to the unclear, they say, is from the class of things which change [ἐκ τοῦ γένους τῶν μεταπιπτόντων ἐστίν]’ (§ 234). If the last clause may be paraphrased as ‘belongs to the class of changing arguments’, then Sextus does classify our example as a changing argument. But a better paraphrase reads ‘depends on the class of changing items’; and Sextus probably means to say that the sophistical arguments of the third type turn on the fact that (at least) one of their component assertibles changes its truth-value. Thus Sextus does not explicitly offer his argument as an example of a changing argument. Nonetheless, it is not outrageously audacious to suppose that, in point of fact, the argument which Sextus presents was taken to be, or would have been taken to be, a changing argument. Of course, it is a further question whether the argument actually is a changing argument and which (if any) of the characterizations I have given apply to it. In any event, I shall discuss Sextus’ argument here.

This is it:

It is not the case both that I have propounded something to you already³⁰⁷ and that it is not the case that the stars are even in number.

³⁰³ Note the parallel (cf I vii 22) with the problematical hypothetical argument: an argument with possible premisses is valid—and has an impossible conclusion.

³⁰⁴ On the passage see Ebbesen [*1981], I pp.23-24; Ebert [1991], pp.189-190; Atherton [1993], pp.424-450.

³⁰⁵ οἱ διαλεκτικοί: or rather ‘some logicians ... (for others say other things)’ (§ 235). It is futile to try to put a name to these logicians (*pace* Ebert [1991], pp.177-182—see Atherton [1993], p.428 n.28).

³⁰⁶ The origin of the classification is disputed. It is evidently not a formal διαίρεσις, and I suppose that it was a makeshift and practical device without any theoretical pretensions.

³⁰⁷ πρῶτον: perhaps, more specifically, ‘as a first premiss’. – Note, in any case, that the sentence ‘I have propounded something to you already’ must be taken to mean ‘I have already offered you a premiss *in this argument*’—what may have happened in another argument is irrelevant.

But I have propounded something to you already.

Therefore: the stars are even in number. (*PH* II 231)³⁰⁸

The first premiss has a complex structure: it is the negation of a conjunction, the first conjunct of which is

I have propounded something to you already.

The second conjunct is

It is not the case that the stars are even in number,

that is to say, it is a negated assertible. The form of the argument can thus be expressed schematically as follows:

Not (both P and not Q).

P.

Therefore: Q.

The argument has the form of a Stoic third indemonstrable.³⁰⁹ Hence a Stoic must accept that it is valid—as no doubt it is.

As for the truth-value of the premisses, the commentary which Sextus ascribes to his logicians is lucid enough:

Since—let us suppose—nothing has yet been propounded, the negation of the conjunction is true. For the conjunction itself is false in virtue of the fact that it contains the false component ‘I have propounded something to you already’.³¹⁰

That is to say,

³⁰⁸ οὐχὶ καὶ ἡρώτηκά τί σε πρῶτον καὶ οὐχὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἄρτιοί εἰσιν· ἡρώτηκα δὲ τί σε πρῶτον· οἱ ἄρα ἀστέρες ἄρτιοί εἰσιν.

³⁰⁹ Given the metalogical account of the indemonstrables, and given that ‘Q’ and ‘not Q’ are opposites, then Sextus’ example is a straightforward case of a third indemonstrable (see above, n.227). Given an account in terms of schemata, this is not—or not evidently—the case; for it is not evident that Sextus’ example has the precise form:

Not (both A and B).

A.

Therefore: not B.

³¹⁰ μηδενὸς γὰρ προηρωτημένου κατὰ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τὸ ἀποφατικὸν τῆς συμπλοκῆς ἀληθὲς γίνεται, ψευδοῦς τῆς συμπλοκῆς οὕσης παρὰ τὸ ἐμπεπλέχθαι ψεῦδος τὸ ἡρώτηκά τί σε πρῶτον ἐν αὐτῇ.

I have propounded something to you already.

is false—for the argument has only just begun. Hence the conjunction,

I have propounded something to you already and it is not the case that the stars are even in number,

is false—for any conjunction one conjunct of which is false is itself false. Hence the negation of this conjunction is true. And the negation of this conjunction is the first premiss of the argument.

But after the negation of the conjunction has been propounded, the further assumption ('I have propounded something to you already') becomes true, since the negation of the conjunction has been propounded before the further assumption. (*PH* II 234)³¹¹

That is to say, the truth of the second premiss is guaranteed by the existence of the first premiss.

Hence we have a valid argument with two true premisses. Hence the conclusion is true. That is to say, the stars are even in number. Moreover, we can be sure that the two premisses are true; hence we may infer—and accept with confidence—that the stars are even in number.

But this is absurd—how could anything about the stars be established by an argument such as the one Sextus expounds? Moreover, if this argument establishes that the stars are even in number, then we can establish absolutely anything we like—including the proposition that the stars are not even in number. For the content of the proposition which is represented by 'Q' in the schema plays no part at all in the unfolding of Sextus' argument: the place of 'Q' may be taken by absolutely any proposition whatever and the resulting argument will go through exactly as Sextus' argument goes through.

The conclusion of Sextus' argument is said to be not false but unclear.³¹² This is not an accident; for in § 231 the argument is expressly adduced to illustrate the type of sophism which treacherously leads us into the bog of unclarity. Sextus' logicians apparently hold that any sophism which leads to an unclear conclusion will depend on changing items; for the remark that

³¹¹ μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐρωτηθῆναι τὸ ἀποφατικὸν τῆς συμπλοκῆς, τῆς προσλήψεως ἀληθοῦς γενομένης (ἡρώτηκα δὲ τί σε πρώτον) διὰ τὸ ἡρωτησθαι πρὸ τῆς προσλήψεως τὸ ἀποφατικὸν τῆς συμπλοκῆς, ...

³¹² The proposition that the stars are even (or odd) in number is a stock example of something unclear or ἄδηλον (i.e. something 'once and for all' unclear, something which forever escapes our knowledge), over which a good Stoic must suspend judgement: e.g. I xxviii 3; II xvi 2; cf Sextus, *PH* II 90, 97.

‘inference to the unclear ... is from the class of things which change’ plainly refers to the third type of sophism in general and not just to the particular example which Sextus has chosen.³¹³ This opinion is false—and evidently false. For unclear conclusions can be produced in any number of sophistical ways. Either Sextus has garbled the view which he ascribes to his logicians, or else the logicians were a confused bunch.

However that may be, there must be something wrong with the argument. And—or so perhaps we may suspect—what is wrong with it must have something to do with the fact that it is some sort of changing argument. Now it is clear that the change which takes place takes place in the course of the argument; it is clear, too, that it takes place whenever the argument is propounded—the change depends not upon the external circumstances in which the argument is propounded but rather on the internal content of the component assertibles of the argument. Hence the example belongs to the third of the categories which I distinguished—it is an example of type (III)(b) or perhaps (III)(c). And perhaps this is precisely what accounts for its sophistical character.

Sextus preserves not only the argument itself but also the response which his logicians gave to it. He does not himself think much of the response—what the logicians say on these matters, he growls, may ‘tickle our ears’, but it is an unnecessary waste of time (§ 235). However, he produces no specific criticism of the response, nor does he suggest anything to supplement or supplant what the logicians say. This is the response:

After the negation of the conjunction has been propounded, the further assumption (‘I have propounded something to you already’) becomes true, since the negation of the conjunction has been propounded before the further assumption; so that the proposition of the negation of the conjunction comes to be false inasmuch as what was false in the conjunction comes to be true. Hence the conclusion can never be inferred, since the negation of the conjunction does not hold together with the further assumption. (*PH* II 234)³¹⁴

The response to the argument thus consists of an exegesis and a solution.

First, the exegesis. The logicians claim that ‘the negation of the conjunction comes to be false’, i.e. that the first premiss of the argument changes its truth-value. The second premiss, when it is propounded, is true.

³¹³ But the logicians need not be taken to insinuate that any sophism which depends on changing items will lead to an unclear conclusion, an insinuation which is certainly false.

³¹⁴ μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐρωτηθῆναι τὸ ἀποφατικὸν τῆς συμπλοκῆς, τῆς προσλήψεως ἀληθοῦς γενομένης (ἠρώτηκα δὲ τί σε πρῶτον) διὰ τὸ ἠρωτησθαι πρὸ τῆς προσλήψεως τὸ ἀποφατικὸν τῆς συμπλοκῆς, ἢ τοῦ ἀποφατικοῦ τῆς συμπλοκῆς πρότασις γίνεται ψευδὴς τοῦ ἐν τῷ συμπεπλεγμένῳ ψεύδους γενομένου ἀληθοῦς· ὥς μηδέποτε δύνασθαι συναχθῆναι τὸ συμπέρασμα μὴ συνυπάρχοντος τοῦ ἀποφατικοῦ τῆς συμπλοκῆς τῇ προσλήψει.

But the second premiss is the first conjunct of the conjunction negated in the first premiss. That is to say, it is the same assertible as that conjunct, given the Stoic account of assertibles.³¹⁵ Hence the first conjunct has changed its truth-value. Hence—or so the logicians infer—the first premiss has changed its truth-value: it was true and it is now false.

But this last inference—as several scholars have justly observed—is invalid. ‘P’ was false; and its falsity guaranteed the truth of ‘Not (both P and not Q)’, whatever the truth-value of ‘Q’. ‘P’ is now true; but the truth of ‘P’ does not in general guarantee the falsity of ‘Not (both P and not Q)’. Rather, given that ‘P’ is true, then the negated conjunction is false if ‘Not Q’ is true, true if ‘Not Q’ is false. That is to say, the first premiss changes its truth-value if and only if it is false that Q—if and only if as a matter of fact the stars are not even in number.³¹⁶

The logicians’ inference is invalid, and they do not establish that the first premiss changes its truth-value. Nor, equally, can we show that the first premiss does not change its truth-value—as long as the number of the stars remains obscure, we shall not know whether the first premiss changes or rests. But we surely can tell that the sophism does not depend on any putative change in the truth-value of the first premiss. For we can see, evidently enough, that the argument is sophistic, and we cannot tell whether or not the first premiss changes its truth-value. Thus the invalid inference which seduced Sextus’ logicians led them to a false diagnosis of the sophism.

It will not help, of course, to change the example—the error does not derive from the particular choice of illustration which the logicians hit upon. In any illustrative example, the assertible for which ‘Q’ stands must be unclear; and any unclear ‘Q’ whatsoever will fall foul of the objection I have just rehearsed.

We might think of refining the logicians’ idea. Consider not a single argument, but a pair of arguments of the Sextan form. In one of the arguments substitute any unclear statement for ‘Q’. In the other substitute the negation of this same statement (which will also be unclear). Thus take Sextus’ actual argument:

³¹⁵ Note that we cannot replace ‘I have already propounded something’ by ‘This is not the first premiss of this argument’, which may well seem equivalent to it. For the proposed replacement will not induce any change in truth-value: the sentence ‘This is not the first premiss of this argument’ will express two different assertibles in its two different occurrences in the argument.

³¹⁶ Suppose, first, that ‘P’ is true and ‘Q’ is true. Then ‘Not Q’ is false. Hence ‘Both P and not Q’ is false. Hence ‘Not (both P and not Q)’ is true. Hence the first premiss has not changed its truth-value. Suppose, secondly, that ‘P’ is true and ‘Q’ false. Then ‘Not Q’ is true. Hence ‘Both P and not Q’ is true. Hence ‘Not (both P and not Q)’ is false. Hence the first premiss has changed its truth-value.

A) It is not the case both that I have propounded something to you already
and that it is not the case that the stars are even in number.
But I have propounded something to you already.

Therefore: the stars are even in number.

and couple it with:

B) It is not the case both that I have propounded something to you already
and that the stars are even in number.
But I have propounded something to you already.

Therefore: the stars are not even in number.

Each argument concludes to something unclear. Moreover, if 'Q' is true—if it is true that the number of the stars is even—then the first premiss of argument [B] changes its truth-value, and if 'Q' is false—if it is not true that the number of the stars is even—then the first premiss of argument [A] changes its truth-value. Since 'Q' is either true or false, either [A] or [B] is a changing argument. Since we cannot tell whether or not 'Q' is true, we cannot tell which of the two arguments is a changing argument— but we can be sure that we have in fact given precisely one example of a changing argument. Very ingenious—but Sextus' logicians certainly had no such refinement as this in their minds, and it cannot be adduced to help them out of the mire.

Or perhaps they are not in the mire at all—perhaps I have been unfair to their logical prowess? I have been supposing that the logicians took the first premiss of the argument to change its *truth-value*. Now although the premiss cannot be proved to change its truth-value, it can be proved to undergo a different change—and a change which seems rather pertinent to the status of the argument as an example of the third type of sophism. For the first premiss can be proved to change what might be called its cognitive status: it changes from being clear to being unclear.

Presumably the first conjunct of the conjunction included in the first premiss, namely

I have not already propounded anything,

is clear or *πρόδηλον*; that is to say, it is either clearly true (when it is true) or else clearly false (when it is false). Now when the first premiss is propounded, this conjunct is clearly false. But a conjunction one conjunct of which is clearly false is itself clearly false; and the negation of something which is clearly false is itself clearly true. Hence—or so it seems plausible to conclude—the first premiss itself, when it is propounded, is clearly true.

But once the second premiss has been propounded, the truth-value of the first premiss is no longer clear; for the truth-value of the second conjunct is unclear, and this infects the whole premiss. (Suppose that it is unclear whether 'Q' is true. Then it is unclear whether 'Not Q' is true. Hence it is unclear whether 'Both P and not Q' is true—and hence it is unclear whether 'Not (both P and not Q)' is true.) The argument has changed in this sense: one of its premisses was once clear and then became unclear. And we might then imagine that the sophism which the argument presents may perhaps depend on precisely this change in cognitive status.

Should we then conclude that the logicians who discussed the argument actually diagnosed not a change in truth-value but a change in cognitive status—and that Sextus misunderstood or distorted what they had said? And should we further conclude that Sextus' example—whatever he himself may have thought—is not and was not presented as a changing argument, so that no ancient example of a changing argument has been conserved?³¹⁷ I confess that I am not myself in the least inclined to draw such conclusions.

Often enough when scholars detect a *bêtise* in a 'secondary' author such as Cicero or Sextus, they incline to pin the error on the secondary author himself: Chrysippus originally presented a brilliantly clear and concise argument—which dull old Cicero then fuddled; the logicians originally wrote with lucidity and exactitude—and silly old Sextus made a fist of it all. Of course, some primary sources are brilliant and some secondary sources are dullards—or worse. But in the present case we have no independent knowledge of the primary source; and as for the secondary source, it is far from evident to me that Sextus was a dullard. It is reasonable to accuse him of garbling only if we have some particular grounds, in this or that passage, for suspecting malicious or careless distortion. In the section on sophisms there are no such grounds. Sextus' report is pellucid, and he has no axe to plough or furrow to grind.

Moreover, in the present case we have a special reason not to ascribe an error to Sextus. For the logicians' resolution of the sophism—to which I am coming—clearly presupposes that what they diagnosed was a change in truth-value rather than a change in cognitive status. That is to say, if we suppose that Sextus garbled the logicians' diagnosis, then we must also suppose that he garbled their resolution—and garbled it in such a way that it fits, to a T, the garbled version of the diagnosis. Well, you may suppose what you will—but this way madness lies.³¹⁸

³¹⁷ Unless, of course, we imagine that the ancient category of changing arguments was broad enough to include arguments the components of which change their cognitive status.

³¹⁸ 'What Sextus should have said, presumably, is that the conjunction becomes ἀδελον ... I am reluctant to say whether the fault is his or his source's' (Atherton [1993], p.447 n.56). But what Sextus should have said is whatever the logicians in fact said: he purports to

I add that a reference to change in cognitive status is not in fact to the point. As I have said, the content of the proposition which replaces 'Q' in the sophistical argument is wholly immaterial. Then replace it by something which is not unclear but rather evidently false; say, by

The number 3 is even.

Then the cognitive status of the first premiss will not change—but the argument will still be a sophism, and a sophism (or so I suppose) for the very reason that Sextus' argument is a sophism. Cognitive status, in other words, is a red herring: truth-value is what matters.

For Sextus' argument does undergo a change in truth-value: one of its component assertibles changes in truth-value (so that in effect the argument falls in the class (III)(c)); and in addition one of its premisses changes in truth-value (so that it also falls in the class (III)(b)). For the assertible expressed by

I have propounded something to you already

changes its truth-value in the course of the argument—it changes its truth-value during any period in which the argument is propounded. This assertible is a component of the argument—it is the first conjunct of the negated conjunction; and it is also a premiss of the argument—it is the second premiss. Thus the logicians were quite right to claim that there is a change of truth-value as the argument is propounded; but they called attention to this change—for reasons which I cannot fathom—in connexion with the wrong premiss.

The second premiss is false at the start of the argument—and this is what ensures that the first premiss is (then) true; and the second premiss is true when it is propounded. It is precisely this change of truth-value which allows the argument to proceed regardless of the content of the second conjunct in the first premiss—and hence regardless of the conclusion. It is precisely this change in truth-value which accounts for the sophism: not, of course, for the fact that the sophism concludes to something *unclear*, but for the fact that the sophism concludes to *anything whatever* (and *a fortiori* to anything unclear).

I turn now to the resolution which Sextus' logicians offer us. They affirm that 'the conclusion can never be inferred since the negation of the conjunction does not hold together with [συνυπάρχειν] the further

rehearse their resolution, not to resolve the sophism himself. And I confess that I can see no reason for any reluctance.

assumption'—that is to say, because the two premisses are never true at the same time as one another. 'Not (P and not Q)' and 'P' are not true at the same time. Hence we cannot infer 'Q' from them.

If we are allowed to generalize this resolution, then we shall first arrive at something like the following principle:

(P1) Given that ' A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n : therefore B' is a valid argument: then infer that B only if, for some time t , all the A_i s hold at t .

(P1) may be an acceptable principle; but it is less than satisfactory. For it is a negative principle which offers only a necessary condition—'only if ...'—for the inference. It tells us, in effect, when we may not draw a conclusion: it does not tell us when we may draw a conclusion.

Then let the 'only if' be strengthened to an 'if and only if', to give the principle:

(P2) Given that ' A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n : therefore B' is a valid argument: then infer that B if and only if, for some time t , all the A_i s hold at t .

But (P2) is unacceptable—it licenses inferences which we shall want to avoid. Take again my Monday-Tuesday argument, propounded as midnight chimes. The two premisses of the argument are sometimes both true—indeed, for most of the week they are both true. Hence there is some time at which they are both true. Hence, according to (P2), we may infer the conclusion. But the conclusion will often be false—hence (P2) allows us to infer false conclusions from true premisses.

But perhaps neither (P1) nor (P2) answers exactly to Sextus' report. According to Sextus, the logicians hold that 'the conclusion can never [οὐδέποτε] be inferred' because the premisses are not true at the same time; and (P1) and (P2) pay no attention to the word 'never'. I take it that the logicians hold that *at no time* can you infer the conclusion because *at no time* are the premisses all true. And this suggests not (P1) or (P2) but rather a principle such as:

(P3) Given that ' A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n : therefore B' is a valid argument: then infer at t that B if and only if all the A_i s hold at t .

This principle is superior to (P2). Whereas (P2) requires only that the premisses all be true at some one time, (P3) requires that they all be true at the time of the inference. Hence (P3) deals adequately with my Monday-Tuesday example. And we might think to refine the principle a little further in order to leave open the possibility of an argument's changing its validity, thus:

(P4) Given that ' A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n ; therefore B ' is a valid argument at t : then infer at t that B if and only if all the A_i s hold at t .

Unlike (P2), the two principles (P3) and (P4) will never allow us to infer a false conclusion by way of a valid argument. Suppose that an argument is valid (or valid at a time t) and that each of its premisses is true at t . Since the argument is valid at t , then the corresponding conditional— 'If A_1 and A_2 and ... and A_n , then B '—is true at t . Since each A_i is true at t , the conjunction ' A_1 and A_2 and ... and A_n ' will be true at t . Hence at t we have two truths:

If A_1 and A_2 and ... and A_n , then B

and

A_1 and A_2 and ... and A_n ;

and in that case ' B ', the conclusion of our inference, is also true at t . Thus (P3) and (P4) protect us from error.

Perhaps they do so at a price? Perhaps they *exclude* certain inferences which we should find acceptable? Examples of at least two different kinds might be alleged. Consider, first, the following sophisticated case.³¹⁹

Socrates is pale.

Anything which is pale at any time in its history is coloured at every time in its history.

Therefore: Socrates is coloured at every time in his history.

The argument seems to be valid. Suppose that 'Socrates is pale' is true when we begin to propound the argument but false by the time we draw the conclusion. (As we argue, Socrates blushes violently.) Then, according to (P3) or (P4), we may not draw the conclusion. But surely we are warranted in drawing the conclusion? After all, provided that at some time or other 'Socrates is pale' is true, the conclusion is guaranteed to be true. Other refined examples of this sort are easily thought up.

The second type of case is less sophisticated. The two principles outlaw inferences from false premisses: if any one of the A_i s is false at t , then—according to (P3) and (P4)—I may not infer at t that B . But surely we often, and legitimately, argue from premisses which are false. Yesterday I said to myself:

If today is Tuesday, I'm lecturing at 8.00.

³¹⁹ Which I owe to Ben Morison.

Today is Tuesday.

Therefore: I'm lecturing at 8.00.

And I acted on the conclusion. Alas, the second premiss was false—but my inference, surely, was impeccable?

In this case the falsity of the premiss was unsuspected; but we sometimes make inferences from premisses which we take to be false or even know to be false: standard *reductio ad impossibile* arguments are often like this. I want to prove that there is no highest prime number. I decide to proceed by *reductio*. Thus I start by setting down a premiss which I strongly suspect to be false, namely

There is a highest prime number.

And I proceed to make inferences on the basis of this premiss.

The refined example I leave to the reader. As to inferences from false premisses, I may remark that Frege notoriously maintained—and frequently—that inferences cannot be drawn from false premisses, or at any rate cannot be drawn from premisses which are taken to be false. After all, the point of an inference is to get you from one belief to another—and you aim to get to *true* beliefs. That is why a good inference must start from true premisses. If a logician of Frege's genius could subscribe to such a view, we need have no qualms in attributing it to Sextus' logicians. Indeed, something like it has already turned up in Epictetus.³²⁰ What, then, is to be done with *reductio* arguments and the like? Frege had an answer to this question. No doubt we can invent one for Sextus' logicians.

But I must return to Epictetus. What does *he* say about his changing arguments? His remarks, like those of Sextus' logicians, divide into two parts: there is an exposition of the problem, and then a resolution. First, the exposition:

Now there are cases in which we have soundly granted the premisses and such-and-such results from them: although it is false, nonetheless it results. Then what is it appropriate for me to do? Accept the falsity? How can I? Say: 'I did not soundly concede the premisses I agreed to?' That is not allowed either. Or: 'It doesn't result by way of what was conceded'? Nor is that allowed. Then what is to be done in such a case? (I vii 13-16)

I grant, correctly, the two premisses of an argument. The conclusion follows—and yet it is false. (Epictetus, unlike Sextus' logicians, speaks expressly of the falsity of the conclusion—he is not concerned with its cognitive status but with its truth-value.) Then what am I to do? There are

³²⁰ Above, p.33.

three straightforward responses—but each of them Epictetus outlaws. First, I cannot simply grit my teeth and accept the conclusion—for (*ex hypothesi*) the conclusion is false. Secondly, I cannot go back on the premisses and deny that I was ever right to accept them—for (*ex hypothesi*) I was right to accept them. Thirdly, I cannot maintain that the argument is invalid, that the conclusion does not follow from the premisses—for (*ex hypothesi*) the argument is valid.

There is the problem. Three possibilities are excluded—and *quantum*, as it appears, *non datur*. But there *must* be a fourth option. Here is the second part of the text:

Well, just as the fact that you have borrowed is not enough to show that you are still in debt—rather, it must be true in addition that you still stand under the debt and that it has not been dissolved –, so here the fact that we have granted the premisses is not enough to show that we must concede the conclusion—we must still stand under the concession of the premisses. Now if they remain to the end as they were when they were conceded, then it is absolutely necessary that we still stand under the concession and accept what follows from the premisses. But if they do not remain so, we need not accept it. For this conclusion no longer results for us nor does it accord with our position, since we have renounced the concession of the premisses. (§§ 16-19)

There is, after all, a fourth option: we may ‘renounce’ the premisses. That is to say, while continuing to maintain that we were right to accept the premisses when we did accept them, we may now refuse to accept them any longer. Such is Epictetus’ solution to the sophism: how good is it?

It has a ‘moral’ smell to it—a smell produced not only by the putative parallel with debtors and creditors, but also by the wording of the text. Epictetus insinuates that he is concerned to tell us what we ought to do, what morally speaking we ought to do. And after all, the official function of I vii as a whole is to remind us that logic is concerned with ‘what is appropriate’.³²¹ Logic teaches us how we ought to behave in certain areas—it teaches us (as a later generation of logicians put it) the laws of thought, the laws according to which we *ought* to think. This may seem quaint. It is quaint. It may seem worse than quaint; for surely the pressing question is not: How ought I, morally speaking, to react to a changing argument of this sort? Rather it is: What is the correct way of solving the puzzle raised by the argument, of resolving the paradox, of disarming the sophism? The question, in short, is a logical question and not an ethical question.³²²

³²¹ Above, pp.61-62.

³²² ‘What ought I to do about the Sorites paradox?’—‘Nothing at all: just ignore it’. Good moral advice, particularly to someone incapable of sustained philosophical reflection. But hardly a decent logical answer to the question—and when Chrysippus said (or seemed to say) something like it, Carneades was rightly scornful (Cicero, *Luc* xxix 93: cf Barnes [1982]). Why should I not also cite Wittgenstein? ‘You might get $p \rightarrow p$ by means of Frege’s system. If

Now this is surely true—but it would not have discountenanced Epictetus; for, or so he evidently holds, what a good man ought, morally speaking, to do when faced by a logical puzzle is precisely to find the correct logical solution to it. The appropriate behaviour, in the area of logic, is precisely the behaviour which logic demands.

Will a wise man refuse to engage with this man, and avoid examining the matter and discussing it with him? Then who else is capable of using his reason and clever at questioning and answering—and indeed undeceivable and immune to sophisms? Then will he engage but not care if in matters of reason he behaves at random and haphazard? How then will he still be the sort of man we conceive him to be? (§§ 25-27)

The Sage, the Good Man, is a logician—indeed, it was Old Stoic doctrine that only the Sage is a logician (Diogenes Laertius, VII 83). After all, logic itself is a virtue (Diogenes Laertius, VII 46). All this may well seem pretty dubious; and even if you are prepared to swallow it, you may still think that it imports the wrong sort of consideration into a logical inquiry. Nonetheless, the result is that—in principle—Epictetus urges us to proceed in the way in which any decent logician would urge us to proceed.

How, then, does he urge us to proceed? His solution to the puzzle is advocated by way of an analogy with debt. You lent me £5 a few weeks ago: do I now owe you £5? Well, the fact that in the past I borrowed £5 from you is not a sufficient condition for my now owing you £5—since I may, for example, already have paid off the debt, or you may have waived it, or one of the conditions on which it was made may have failed, ... True enough—but how does this apply to the changing argument? My originally accepting the premisses corresponds to my borrowing the £5. My still being obliged to admit the premisses corresponds to my still owing you the £5. My drawing the conclusion corresponds to my paying you the £5 (with interest?). So—and this is the crucial point of the analogy—just as the fact that I borrowed from you in the past is not a sufficient condition for my still being in debt to you, so the fact that I admitted the premisses in the past is not a sufficient condition for my now being obliged to admit them: after all, things may in the interim have changed.

And, in the case of the changing argument, things have changed. The premisses were true when I accepted them. That is what Epictetus means when he says that I correctly accepted them; and that is why I cannot now go back on that acceptance and claim that I was wrong then to accept them. To do so would be to imply something false, namely that the premisses

you can draw any conclusion you like from it, then that, as far as I can see, is all the trouble you can get into. And I would say, 'Well, then, just don't draw any conclusions from a contradiction'.

were not then true. But the premisses *were* then true. However, they are no longer true. And this change—so Epictetus implies—is enough to cancel the debt. I no longer owe you the conclusion: not because I have already paid you the conclusion, nor because you no longer insist that I draw it (these options in any event make little non-metaphorical sense); but because the circumstances have changed in such a way as to invalidate or unmake the debt—the premisses have lost their value.

The analogy is charming. But what precisely does it imply? That is to say, what principle—parallel to principles (P1) to (P4)—might we extract from it. Well, Epictetus says that we must repay a debt at *t* if and only if we still owe the sum at *t*. That is to say, we must infer a conclusion at *t* if and only if we are obliged to accept the premisses at *t*; or in other words: the crucial feature of the premisses is not their truth-value at the time when you first accepted them but their truth-value at the time of the inference. The essential point, then, is this: Given that an argument is valid (at *t*), then at *t* draw the conclusion if and only if at *t* all the premisses are true. And that is simply an informal way of stating principle (P3)—or perhaps principle (P4).

In short, I incline to ascribe to Epictetus and to Sextus' logicians the same principle, and hence the same resolution of one of the problems caused by some changing arguments. And I guess that the principle may have been a standard piece of imperial Stoic wisdom. I add only that in Epictetus' text there is no sign of the logical morass into which Sextus' logicians slipped.

Sextus' argument is evidently conceived of as an event: it is something which takes time, and its constituent parts—the positing of each premiss, the drawing of the conclusion—follow each other in a fixed temporal order. Epictetus is also evidently thinking of an event—and here of a public event, of an argument between a pair of interlocutors. You ask me questions. I respond. You invite me to draw an inference. I accede. The matter takes time, and its constituent parts, themselves events, are temporally ordered. Nor does this seem to be an accidental feature of the two discussions; for if assertibles are to change their truth-value in the course of an argument, then time must elapse as the argument proceeds—and so the argument, it seems, must be conceived of as an extended event.

It is sometimes suggested that ancient logic was, in general, conceived of on a 'dialectical' model: an argument is essentially a sort of debate, conducted either *in foro publico* or *in foro interno*.³²³ Debates, and hence arguments, are complex events. Consider the following passage in which Sextus argues that arguments do not exist:

³²³ The classic account is in Kapp [1931], pp.1061-1064.

An argument is a compound of assertibles, and compound objects cannot exist unless the items from which they are composed co-exist with one another (this is clear from beds and the like). But the parts of an argument do not co-exist with one another. For when we say the first premiss, neither the second premiss nor the conclusion yet exists; and when we say the second premiss, the former premiss no longer exists and the conclusion does not yet exist; and when we utter the conclusion the premisses no longer subsist. Therefore the parts of an argument do not co-exist with one another—whence it will be seen that arguments do not exist.³²⁴

The merits of this reasoning are debatable. Here I cite it for its presuppositions; for Sextus evidently takes it for granted that arguments are temporally extended items. And there is no hint that this might be regarded as a controversial view.

Or again, consider the hoary debate over the correct order of the premisses in an argument—a debate which, historically speaking, concentrated on Aristotelian syllogistic and buzzed around the silly issue of the legitimacy of the ‘fourth figure’.³²⁵ The general question is this: Does the order of the premisses of an argument matter to it, from a logical point of view?

Ancient texts show some confusion. Thus Apuleius, for example, remarks that two of the ‘additional’ syllogisms of the Aristotelian first figure require a change in the order of the premisses ‘so that the first premiss is negative’ (*int ix*, 205.1-2 Moreschini)—the order of the premisses, it seems, does make a logical difference. But later Apuleius rejects the view of Theophrastus, who added a ‘second *Darapti*’ to the third figure, on the grounds that ‘it makes no difference which premiss is first enunciated’ (*xi*, 207.22). And on the second figure Apuleius havers: the first two syllogisms in it do not differ from one another—except insofar as ‘the order of enunciation is varied’ (*x*, 207.2-3): *Cesare* and *Camestres* do not differ from one another—or else perhaps they do. Does the order of the premisses matter to a Peripatetic syllogism, or is it a thing of indifference? Apuleius has not made up his mind—and as a result, his account of categorical syllogistic is muddled and inconsistent.

However that may be, many logicians did regard the order as logically significant. That is to say, conceiving of a syllogism as a complex event with temporally ordered parts, they reasonably supposed that an argument of the form ‘*A*₁, *A*₂: therefore *B*’ was in principle to be distinguished from an argument with the same component propositions but having the form ‘*A*₂, *A*₁: therefore *B*’; and they further supposed that in principle one such argument might be valid and the other invalid—or at any rate, that there might be some logical difference between the two arguments. The modern

³²⁴ *PH* II 144; cf II 109 (on compound assertibles); *M* VIII 81-84, 135-136.

³²⁵ See e.g. Patzig [1968], pp.59-61.

orthodoxy on Aristotelian syllogisms will have none of this: of course, it is said, the order of the premisses can have no logical importance—‘ A_1, A_2 : therefore B ’ is valid if and only if ‘ A_2, A_1 : therefore B ’ is valid.

But this modern orthodoxy is only a little better than the view it opposes; for in denying that the order of the premisses in an argument is logically pertinent, it shares the presupposition of that opposite view—the presupposition that the premisses of an argument have an order. But the premisses of an argument have no order at all: they form a set, they do not form an ordered sequence. To be sure, in expressing the premisses of any argument, you must express them in one order or another: if you speak them, you must speak one before another; if you inscribe them, then the inscriptions will, additionally and trivially, stand in some spatial relation to one another. Moreover, from a psychological point of view, the order in which you choose to produce the premisses may make a difference—to your chances of persuading an interlocutor, for example. But none of this says anything about the premisses themselves. From the fact that any uttering of the premisses has a certain temporal order we cannot infer that the premisses themselves have a temporal order—as well infer from the fact that uttering is done at a certain pitch and volume that the premisses have a certain pitch and volume.

Arguments are not in fact temporally extended or temporally ordered items. Ancient arguments, it seems, were different; or rather, ancient logicians, it is commonly thought, took a different view of the nature of arguments. Ancient arguments are datable; and they have temporal careers—they last, they endure. Their premisses possess an order, a chronological order. It is sometimes supposed that this marks a general and crucial difference between ancient and modern logic; for a modern logician does not take an argument to be an event, and such questions as ‘When?’ and ‘For how long?’ do not arise in the timeless realm of his logic. It might further be suggested that it is precisely the ancient conception of arguments as events which allows the formulation of certain puzzles—notably the puzzles raised by changing arguments—which do not and cannot arise within a modern context. A final suggestion: so much the worse for ancient logic.

In retort to all this it might be observed, first, that the distinction between the ancients and the moderns is at best overblown. After all, modern logicians and philosophers do still employ a conception of inference according to which inferences are events. Thus Frege insisted that an inference is a complex psychological event in which one judgement (the judgement which expresses the conclusion) is made after, and in consequence of, a number of other judgements (the judgements which express the premisses). Fregean judgements are quite explicitly said to be

events—they are datable psychological acts. And Fregean inferences are quite certainly complex events—they are ordered sequences of mental events. We can intelligently ask ‘When did you infer that so-and-so?’, just as we can intelligently ask ‘When did you judge that so-and-so?’. Nor is Frege idiosyncratic. These two questions are perfectly ordinary and intelligible questions.

True enough—but surely inferences, *pace* Frege, are of no interest to logic—they are of interest only to biographers and to psychologists.³²⁶ Logic studies the formal relations among assertibles which underwrite any inferences which may happen to take place, relations which hold independently of any such mental events. I may judge, at *t*, that *P*, and then infer at *t** that *Q*; and my inference may be valid. The act of judging is an event, and the act of inferring is an event. But what I judge—the premiss—is not an event; what I infer—the conclusion—is not an event; and the relation between the premiss and the conclusion is not an event. Logic is exclusively concerned with these non-events.

In truth, it matters little whether we allow that a logician may interest himself in acts of judgement and acts of inference, or whether we prefer a more austere view which consigns such things to the junk-room of the psychologist. It matters greatly that we should distinguish between inferences and arguments. The argument:

If Frege thought that inferences were events, then a great logician thought that inferences were events.

Frege thought that inferences were events.

Therefore: a great logician thought that inferences were events.

has no date, and its component propositions have no temporal ordering. Any propounding of that argument—say the propounding which I have just carried out—has a date; and in any such propounding, some components will be propounded before others. The argument is one thing, the propounding another.

Was it really otherwise in antiquity? Did the ancient logicians confuse arguments and propoundings? Did they falsely think that arguments actually were, or had to be construed as, events? Well, in presenting and discussing arguments, the Stoics—like modern logicians—often use the

³²⁶ In Frege’s idiosyncratic symbolism—his *Begriffsschrift*—there is a special sign to mark the fact that a formula is judged true; and all the premisses (and all the conclusions) of the arguments in Frege’s major work, the *Grundgesetze*, are prefixed by this special sign: all of them, in other words, purport to record certain datable events in Frege’s own mental career. Most readers of *Grundgesetze* ignore this curious fact; no reader takes it to be other than irrelevant to Frege’s ends—and mildly embarrassing. But Frege himself, alas, took it seriously.

language of events, and they often invent an imaginary debate in order to illustrate a logical point. In particular, they will no doubt often have presented changing arguments in such dramatic form. But despite this common and understandable habit, Stoic arguments are quite certainly not events. Assertibles do indeed have temporal careers; and they may even, in some cases, come into being and be destroyed.³²⁷ But assertibles are not events—they do not happen. A Stoic argument is a system or sequence of assertibles: hence it is not a system or sequence of events; nor therefore is it a complex event. You cannot decently ask of a Stoic argument, any more than you can decently ask of a modern argument, when it took place or for how long it went on.

Let it be added that the premisses of a Stoic argument are not ordered. It is true that the Stoics sometimes distinguished, in a two-premised argument, between a ‘governing assumption’ or ἡγεμονικὸν λήμμα and a ‘further assumption’ or πρόσληψις.³²⁸ This terminology implies an asymmetry, and might perhaps suggest that one of the premisses comes ‘after’ the other: thus what is *further* assumed, you might think, must be assumed *after* something else. No doubt some philosophers did in fact think in this way—Sextus, for one. Perhaps the Stoics themselves were not, or not always, clear on the matter. But it remains true that the Stoic account of the nature of assertibles and the Stoic definition of an argument demand that arguments are not events and that therefore the premisses of an argument stand in no pertinent chronological relation to one another.³²⁹

But if this is so, and arguments are not events, then how can there be changing arguments? And how, in particular, can an argument change during the time in which it is propounded? Well, there is no difficulty here at all—once arguments are distinguished from propoundings. For although an argument is not an event, the propounding of an argument is an event. You accept the premisses at a time; you draw the conclusion at a time. Since the assertibles which compose an argument are true or false not absolutely but in relation to time, you can always ask whether or not they are true at the time at which you propound them or infer them.

Consider the following argument:

- (1) I have not already propounded a premiss in this argument.
- (2) Either I have already propounded a premiss in this argument or I am in Geneva.

Therefore: I am in Geneva.

³²⁷ See above, p.98.

³²⁸ See e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VII 76; Barnes *et al* [*1991], p.67 n.93.

³²⁹ I may add, by the by, that we should not speak of ‘major’ and ‘minor’ premisses in connection with Stoic arguments: these terms of art have a sense only within Aristotelian categorical syllogistic.

What is the truth-value of premiss (1)? That is to say, what is its truth-value at *t*? Well, that depends on *t*—that is to say, on what happens at *t* and before *t*. Suppose that I express premiss (1) before I express premiss (2): then premiss (1) is true at the time when I express it. Suppose that I express premiss (2) first: then premiss (1) is false when I express it.

The argument is a changing argument in that it contains assertibles which are now true and now false. The truth-value of the premisses at a time does not depend on their order in the argument; for they have no order in the argument. The truth-value of the premisses at a time does depend on the order in which they are propounded; and if they are propounded at all, then—trivially—they must be propounded in some order or other.

In brief, changing arguments are odd items. But they do not depend on the view—the muddled view—that arguments are themselves complex events.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Epictetus is a frustrating author—at least for an historian of logic. Like the Lord whose oracle is at Delphi, he neither states nor hides: he hints.

As far as the technical development of logic is concerned, he hardly even hints. His texts are—I admit—strictly consistent with the hypothesis that no late Stoic made any interesting advance in the subject; that Stoic logic remained the logic which Chrysippus had elaborated and to which Antipater had put the final touches. This hypothesis, I am sure, is false; but if there is conclusive evidence for its falsity, that evidence is to be looked for in sources other than Epictetus.

As far as Stoic attitudes to and interest in logic are concerned, Epictetus' hints are numerous and instructive. His own apparently con-suming interest in moral precepts and ethical improvement was not characteristic of the Stoic philosophers of his age. On the contrary, in this respect at least Epictetus was unorthodox: his contemporaries—Stoic teachers and Stoic pupils—were obsessed not by ethics but by logic; they gave themselves to logical matters with a passion, a single-mindedness, and no doubt a pedantry which galled Epictetus—as it had galled Seneca, and as it has later galled so many earnest philosophers. Doubtless Epictetus exaggerates. Nonetheless, it seems to me beyond doubt that logic engrossed men during this period in the history of philosophy as it has rarely engrossed men in any other period.

Moreover, the logic which engrossed was not the logic of the elementary handbooks—that sort of thing, after all, is essentially unengrossing. It was more subtle, more advanced, more technical. If much of it was based on exegesis or commentary and hence on books, it was none the worse for that; for the books included some tough texts—Chrysippus on the Master Argument was surely no tiro's read. The standard sophisms and conundrums fascinated Epictetus' contemporaries; and if an interest in such things is compatible with intellectual frivolity, it may equally show logical sophistication and seriousness. Moreover, problems of syllogistic analysis and questions about changing arguments and hypothetical arguments 'and the like' do not appeal to the logical butterfly.

Sextus Empiricus presents a sceptical attack on Dogmatic philosophy. In both versions of the attack, in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* and also in

Against the Mathematicians VII–XI, he busies himself with all three parts of Dogmatic philosophy: with logic, with physics, with ethics. In *PH* logic gets a book to itself; physics has two thirds of a book; and ethics is tucked in at the end. In *M*, Books VII and VIII deal with logic, Books IX and X deal with physics, and Book XI deals with ethics. The imbalance is striking—ethics comes a distant third.¹ Not only that: it has frequently been observed that the content of the ethical sections is ‘disappointing’. Compared to the sections on physics and logic, the sections on ethics are jejune. The historical material is astoundingly thin, the range of subject matter is astoundingly limited, the arguments are astoundingly bad—silly or repetitious or merely dull.

Why should this be so? Perhaps it is a reflection of the Pyrrhonists’ own balance of interests—or of Sextus’ personal concerns. After all, you will expect a sceptic to look harder at logic—which includes what we call epistemology—than at any other part or aspect of philosophy; and you might imagine that a sceptic would walk with a gingerly tread along the paths of ethics—it does not do to preach moral scepticism, or at least it does not do to preach moral scepticism openly and at length and in practical detail. Perhaps the imbalance rather reflects a phenomenon common to many authors and many works of philosophy: as you approach the end of a long inquiry, you tend to hurry up. Ethics comes at the end, both in *PH* and in *M*, and Sextus no doubt felt weary, his pen-hand cramped. Perhaps, again, the imbalance reflects the interests of a past age of Dogmatists—the interests of the Dogmatists whom Sextus’ sources confronted rather than the interests of the Dogmatists who were Sextus’ own contemporaries.

Perhaps so. But there is, after all, a far simpler hypothesis: perhaps the imbalance in Sextus’ treatment of the parts of Dogmatic philosophy reflects the philosophical interests of his age. Ethics was, no doubt, a matter of moment in practical life, and a matter of concern to preachers and moralizers. But it was no more than a relatively small, and a relatively unexciting, part of the great business of philosophy.

However that may be, I find it a curiously pleasing reflection that, while old Epictetus solemnly moralized at his pupils in Nicopolis, the common-rooms of the cultivated world stank of logic.

¹ In *PH* logic gets 259 sections, physics 167, ethics 112; in *M* logic gets 934 sections, physics 791, ethics 257. It is true that the figures given here for logic are actually figures for λογική, and that the figures for logic itself would be substantially lower. It is also true that the figures for ethics are inflated inasmuch as a substantial portion of each treatment is devoted to a discussion of the possibility of teaching and learning.

APPENDIX: Epictetus, *Discourses* I vii

I vii is the most important Epictetan discourse to bear upon logic. Several parts of it have been discussed in the body of this monograph, some of them at length. Nonetheless, given the significance of the text and the fact that most translators and commentators have misunderstood some of its crucial sentences and phrases, it seems worthwhile to set out the whole thing as an appendix.

The text largely follows Schenkl: all differences, save differences of punctuation, are explicitly noticed in the *apparatus criticus* (which itself is wholly derivative). The translation aims at fidelity to the thought of Epictetus rather than to his style. The commentary is not comprehensive: rather, it is designed to supplement what I have already said in earlier parts of the monograph.

Περὶ τῆς χρείας τῶν μεταπιπτόντων καὶ
ὑποθετικῶν καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων

- [1] ἡ περὶ τοὺς μεταπίπτοντας καὶ ὑποθετικοὺς ἔτι δὲ τῷ
ἠρωτήσθαι περαίνοντας καὶ πάντας ἀπλῶς τοὺς τοιοῦτους λόγους
5 πραγματεία λανθάνει τοὺς πολλοὺς περὶ καθήκοντος οὕσα. [2]
ζητοῦμεν γὰρ ἐπὶ πάσης ὕλης πῶς ἂν εὖροι ὁ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθὸς τὴν
διέξοδον καὶ ἀναστροφὴν τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ καθήκουσαν. [3] οὐκοῦν ἡ
τοῦτο λεγέτωσαν, ὅτι οὐ συγκαθήσει εἰς ἐρώτησιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν ὁ
σπουδαῖος, ἢ ὅτι συγκαθεῖς οὐκ ἐπιμελήσεται τοῦ μὴ εἰκῇ μηδ' ὥς
10 ἔτυχεν ἐν ἐρωτήσῃ καὶ ἀποκρίσῃ ἀναστρέφεσθαι. [4] μὴ τούτων
μηδέτερον προσδεχομένοις ἀναγκαῖον ὁμολογεῖν ὅτι ἐπίσκεψίν τινα
ποιητέον τῶν τόπων τούτων περὶ οὓς μάλιστα στρέφεται ἐρώτησις καὶ
ἀπόκρισις;
- [5] τί γὰρ ἐπαγγέλλεται ἐν λόγῳ; – τάληθῇ τιθέναι, τὰ ψευδῇ
15 αἵρειν, πρὸς τὰ ἄδηλα ἐπέχειν. – [6] ἄρ' οὖν ἀρκεῖ τοῦτο μόνον
μαθεῖν; – ἀρκεῖ, φησίν. – οὐκοῦν καὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ ἐν χρήσει
νομίσματος μὴ διαπίπτειν ἀρκεῖ τοῦτο ἀκοῦσαι, διότι τὰς μὲν
δοκίμους δραχμὰς παραδέχου, τὰς δ' ἀδοκίμους ἀποδοκιμάζε; – οὐκ
ἀρκεῖ. – [7] τί οὖν δεῖ τούτῳ προσλαβεῖν; – τί γὰρ ἄλλο ἢ δύναμιν
20 δοκιμαστικὴν τε καὶ διακριτικὴν τῶν δοκίμων τε καὶ ἀδοκίμων
δραχμῶν; – [8] οὐκοῦν καὶ ἐπὶ λόγου οὐκ ἀρκεῖ τὸ λεχθέν, ἀλλ'
ἀνάγκη δοκιμαστικὸν γενέσθαι καὶ διακριτικὸν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς καὶ τοῦ
ψεύδους καὶ τοῦ ἀδήλου; – ἀνάγκη. – [9] ἐπὶ τούτοις τί
παραγγέλλεται ἐν λόγῳ; – τὸ ἀκόλουθον τοῖς δοθεῖσιν ὑπὸ σοῦ
25 καλῶς παραδέχου. – [10] ἄγε ἀρκεῖ οὖν κἀνταῦθα γνῶναι τοῦτο; –
οὐκ ἀρκεῖ. – δεῖ δὲ μαθεῖν πῶς τί τιςιν ἀκόλουθον γίνεται καὶ ποτὲ
μὲν ἐν ἐνὶ ἀκολουθεῖ, ποτὲ δὲ πλείοσιν κοινῇ; [11] μὴ ποτε οὖν καὶ
τοῦτο ἀνάγκη προσλαβεῖν τὸν μέλλοντα ἐν λόγῳ συνετῶς
ἀναστραφῆσθαι καὶ αὐτόν τ' ἀποδείξειν ἕκαστα ἀποδόντα καὶ

3 τῷ (vel ἐκ τοῦ, codd recc)] non exhibet S, om Schenkl :: 6 εὖροι (Meibom; Schenkl)] εὐροοῖ codd :: 10 μὴ (codd)] ἢ Schenkl, alii alia :: 15 πρὸς add Meibom, Schenkl :: 17 διότι (vel ὅτι, codd recc)] διὰ τί S, Schenkl :: 18 παραδέχου ... ἀποδοκιμάζε (S supra lin)] παραδέχη ... ἀποδοκιμάζεις S, Schenkl :: 19 τούτῳ (codd, Schenkl)] τοῦτον Schweighäuser :: 26-27 ποτέ ... ποτέ ... (Schenkl)] πότε ... πότε ... codd :: 29 ἀποδείξειν ἕκαστα (codd, Schenkl)] ἀποδείξιν (ed pr) ἐκάστων Meibom, alii alia

On the Utility of Changing Arguments, Hypothetical
Arguments, and the like

[1] Most men are unaware that the study of changing arguments and hypothetical arguments—and also of arguments which conclude by way of questioning, and in general all arguments of this kind—is concerned with what it is appropriate to do. [2] For in any matter we ask how a good man may discover the conduct and behaviour which is appropriate to that matter. [3] Hence they must say either that a virtuous man will not stoop to questioning and answering or that when he does so he will not care if in questioning and answering he behaves at random and haphazard. [4] If they accept neither of these options, then surely they must agree that some consideration should be given to those areas with which questioning and answering are especially concerned?

[5] What, then, does reason counsel?—‘Affirm the true, reject the false, suspend judgement over the unclear.’— [6] Then is it enough to have learned this and nothing more?—‘It is enough’, he says.—Then if you want to avoid mistakes when it comes to using coins, is it enough to have heard this: ‘Accept genuine drachmas and reject counterfeit ones?’—It is not enough.— [7] Then what do you need to acquire in addition to this?—Surely a capacity for testing and discriminating between genuine and counterfeit drachmas?— [8] Then what we said is not enough in the case of reason either: rather, it is necessary to become capable of testing and discriminating among the true and the false and the unclear.—It is necessary.— [9] What in addition to this does reason enjoin?—‘Accept what follows from what you have correctly granted.’— [10] Then is it enough here too to know this?—It is not enough.—But you must learn how one thing follows others—how one thing sometimes follows one thing and sometimes several jointly? [11] Then surely this too must be acquired in addition by anyone who is going to behave intelligently in matters of reason—if he is going both to define and prove things himself and to

τοῖς ἀποδεικνύουσι παρακολουθήσειν μηδ' ὑπὸ τῶν σοφισζομένων διαπλανηθήσεσθαι ὡς ἀποδεικνύοντων; [12] οὐκοῦν ἐλήλυθεν ἡμῖν περὶ τῶν συναγόντων λόγων καὶ τρόπων πραγματεία καὶ γυμνασία, καὶ ἀναγκαία πέφηεν;

- 5 [13] ἀλλὰ δὴ ἔστιν ἐφ' ᾧ δεδώκαμεν ὑγιῶς τὰ λήμματα καὶ συμβαίνει τουτὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν· ψεῦδος δὲ ὃν οὐδὲν ἦττον συμβαίνει. [14] τί οὖν μοι καθήκει ποιεῖν; προσδέχεσθαι τὸ ψεῦδος; καὶ πῶς οἶόν τε; [15] ἀλλὰ λέγειν ὅτι οὐχ ὑγιῶς παρεχώρησα τὰ ὠμολογημένα; καὶ μὴν οὐδὲ τοῦτο δίδοται. ἀλλ' ὅτι οὐ συμβαίνει διὰ τῶν
10 παρακεχωρημένων; ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τοῦτο δίδοται. [16] τί οὖν ἐπὶ τούτων ποιητέον; ἢ μήποτε ὡς οὐκ ἄρκεῖ τὸ δανείσασθαι πρὸς τὸ ἔτι ὀφείλειν ἀλλὰ δεῖ προσεῖναι καὶ τὸ ἐπιμένειν ἐπὶ τοῦ δανείου καὶ μὴ διαλελύσθαι αὐτό, οὕτως οὐκ ἄρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ δεῖν παραχωρεῖν τὸ ἐπιφερόμενον τὸ δεδωκέναι τὰ λήμματα, δεῖ δ' ἐπιμένειν ἐπὶ τῆς
15 παραχωρήσεως αὐτῶν; [17] καὶ δὴ μενόντων μὲν αὐτῶν εἰς τέλος ὅποια παρεχωρήθη, πᾶσα ἀνάγκη ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τῆς παραχωρήσεως ἐπιμένειν καὶ τὸ ἀκόλουθον αὐτοῖς προσδέχεσθαι. <[18] μὴ μενόντων δέ, οὐ δεῖ προσδέχεσθαι> [19] οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔτι οὐδὲ καθ' ἡμᾶς συμβαίνει τοῦτο τὸ ἐπιφερόμενον, ἐπειδὴ τῆς συγχωρήσεως τῶν
20 λημμάτων ἀπέστημεν. [20] δεῖ οὖν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν λημμάτων ἱστορῆσαι καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην μεταβολὴν τε καὶ μετάπτωσιν αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἐρωτήσῃ ἢ τῇ ἀποκρίσῃ ἢ τῷ συλλελογίσθαι ἢ τινι ἄλλῳ τοιούτῳ λαμβάνοντα τὰς μεταπτώσεις ἀφορμὴν παρέχει τοῖς ἀνοήτοις τοῦ ταρασσέσθαι βλέπουσι τὸ ἀκόλουθον. [21] τίνος ἔνεκα; ἴν' ἐν τῷ
25 τόπῳ τούτῳ μὴ παρὰ τὸ καθήκον μηδ' εἰκῇ μηδὲ συγκεχυμένως ἀναστρεφώμεθα.

- [22] καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τε τῶν ὑποθέσεων καὶ τῶν ὑποθετικῶν λόγων· ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ ἔστιν ὅτ' αἰτῆσαί τινα ὑπόθεσιν ὥσπερ ἐπιβάθραν τῷ ἐξῆς λόγῳ. [23] πᾶσαν οὖν τὴν δοθεῖσαν παραχωρητέον ἢ οὐ πᾶσαν;
30 καὶ εἰ οὐ πᾶσαν, τίνα; [24] παραχωρήσαντι δὲ μενετέον

2 ἡμῖν] + ἡ codd recc :: 17-18 <...> (supplevi)] lacunam indicat Schenkl, alii alia :: 22 συλλελογίσθαι (S, Schenkl)] an συλλογίζεσθαι? :: 23 post τοιούτῳ obelum statuit Schenkl, alii alia :: 24 ταρασσέσθαι] + μή codd, Schenkl :: 30 τίνα;] + περὶ τίνος ἢ σκέψις; – περὶ καθήκοντος codd, del Wolf, Schenkl

follow others when they offer proofs, and also not to be misled by those who produce sophisms as though they were proving things. [12] And has there not arisen among us study and training in valid arguments and schemata, and has it not proved necessary?

[13] Now there are cases in which we have soundly granted the premisses and such-and-such results from them: although it is false, nonetheless it results. [14] Then what is it appropriate for me to do? Accept the falsity? How can I? [15] Say: 'I did not soundly concede the premisses I agreed to?' That is not allowed either. Or: 'It doesn't result by way of what was conceded'? Nor is that allowed. [16] Then what is to be done in such a case? Well, perhaps just as the fact that you have borrowed is not enough for you still to be in debt—rather, it must be true in addition that you still stand under the debt and that it has not been discharged—, so here the fact that we have granted the premisses is not enough for us to have to concede the conclusion—we must still stand under the concession of the premisses. [17] Now if they remain to the end as they were when they were conceded, then it is absolutely necessary that we still stand under the concession and accept what follows from the premisses. [18] But if they do not remain so, we need not accept it. [19] For this conclusion no longer results for us nor does it accord with our position, since we have renounced the concession of the premisses. [20] So we must also consider premisses of this sort, and their alterations and changes as a result of which, in the very process of questioning or answering or inferring or whatever, they undergo changes and give the foolish an opportunity to get in a state when they see what follows. [21] Why? So that we do not behave in this area in a way which is inappropriate or random or confused.

[22] It is the same with hypotheses and hypothetical arguments. It is sometimes necessary to postulate some hypothesis as a sort of base for the argument which follows. [23] Then should we concede all hypotheses we are given or not all? And if not all, which? [24] And once we have

- εἰς ἅπαν ἐπὶ τῆς παραχωρήσεως ἢ ἔστιν ὅτε ἀποστατέον; τὰ δ' ἀκόλουθα προσδεκτέον καὶ τὰ μαχόμενα οὐ προσδεκτέον; – ναί. – [25] ἀλλὰ λέγει τις ὅτι ποιήσω σε δυνατοῦ δεξάμενον ὑπόθεσιν ἐπ' ἀδύνατον ἀπαχθῆναι. πρὸς τοῦτον οὐ συγκαθήσει ὁ φρόνιμος, ἀλλὰ φεύξεται ἐξέτασιν καὶ κοινολογίαν; [26] καὶ τίς ἔτι ἄλλος ἐστὶ λόγῳ χρηστικός καὶ δεινὸς ἐν ἐρωτήσῃ καὶ ἀποκρίσει καὶ νῆ Δία ἀνεξαπάτητός τε καὶ ἀσόφιστος; [27] ἀλλὰ συγκαθήσει μὲν, οὐκ ἐπιστραφήσεται δὲ τοῦ μὴ εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ἀναστρέφεσθαι ἐν λόγῳ; καὶ πῶς ἔτι ἔσται τοιοῦτος οἶον αὐτὸν ἐπινοοῦμεν; [28] ἀλλ' ἄνευ τινὸς τοιαύτης γυμνασίας καὶ παρασκευῆς φυλάττειν οἶδός τ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἐξῆς; [29] τοῦτο δεικνύτωσαν καὶ παρέλκει τὰ θεωρήματα ταῦτα πάντα· ἄτοπα γὰρ ἦν καὶ ἀνακόλουθα τῇ προλήψει τοῦ σπουδαίου.
- [30] τί ἔτι ἀργοὶ καὶ ῥάθυμοι καὶ νωθοὶ ἐσμεν καὶ προφάσεις ζητοῦμεν καθ' ἃς οὐ πονήσομεν οὐδ' ἀγρυπνήσομεν ἐξεργαζόμενοι τὸν αὐτῶν λόγον; – [31] ἂν οὖν ἐν τούτοις πλανηθῶ, μή τι τὸν πατέρα ἀπέκτεινα; – ἀνδράποδον, ποῦ γὰρ ἐνθάδε πατήρ ἦν ἢν' αὐτὸν ἀποκτείνῃς; – τί οὖν ἐποίησα; – ὁ μόνον ἦν κατὰ τὸν τόπον ἀμάρτημα, τοῦτο ἡμάρτηκας. [32] ἐπεὶ τοι τοῦτ' αὐτὸ καὶ ἐγὼ 'Ρούφῳ εἶπον ἐπιτιμῶντί μοι ὅτι τὸ παραλειπόμενον ἐν ἐν συλλογισμῷ τινὶ οὐχ εὑρίσκον. οὐχ οἶον εἰ, φημί, τὸ Καπιτώλιον κατέκαυσα· ὁ δ', ἀνδράποδον, ἔφη, ἐνθάδε τὸ παραλειπόμενον Καπιτώλιόν ἐστιν. [33] ἢ ταῦτα μόνον ἀμαρτήματά ἐστι τὸ Καπιτώλιον ἐμπρῆσαι καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἀποκτείνειν, τὸ δ' εἰκῇ καὶ μάτην καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν χρῆσθαι ταῖς φαντασίαις ταῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ μὴ παρακολουθεῖν λόγῳ μὴδ' ἀποδείξει μὴδὲ σοφίσματι, μὴδ' ἀπλῶς βλέπειν τὸ καθ' αὐτὸν καὶ οὐ καθ' αὐτὸν ἐν ἐρωτήσῃ καὶ ἀποκρίσει, τούτων δ' οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ἀμάρτημα;

1 παραχωρήσεως (Reiske)] τηρήσεως codd, Schenkl :: 6 ἐν (add Meibom)] ἐπ' add Richards :: 8 εἰκῇ] + καὶ φιλόσοφον S in margine :: 12 πάντα· ἄτοπα γὰρ (Richards)] πάντα, ἄτοπα codd, Schenkl, alii alia :: 16 αὐτῶν (Salmasius, Schenkl)] αὐτόν codd :: 18 ἐποίησα] ἐποίησας codd, Schenkl :: 21 οὐχ οἶον εἰ, φημί (Elter)] οὐχ οἶον μὲν, φημί S; μὴ γὰρ, ἔφην codd recc; οὐχ οἶον μὲν, φημί, εἰ Blass, Schenkl :: κατέκαυσα (Schenkl)] κατεσκεύασα S, κατεσκάψα vel ἐνέπρησα codd recc

conceded a hypothesis, should we stand by the concession come what may, or should we sometimes renounce it? Should we accept what follows from it and not accept what conflicts?—Yes.— [25] But someone says: ‘I’ll bring it about that, having accepted a hypothesis of something possible, you are led on to an impossibility.’ Will a wise man refuse to stoop to this man, and avoid examining the matter and discussing it with him? [26] Then who else is capable of using his reason and clever at questioning and answering—and indeed undeceivable and immune to sophisms? [27] Then will he engage but not care if in matters of reason he behaves at random and haphazard? How then will he still be the sort of man we conceive him to be? [28] But will he be able to preserve coherence without some training and preparation of this sort? [29] Let them prove this and all these theorems are superfluous; for after all they are out of place and do not fit our preconception of what a virtuous man is.

[30] Why are we still lazy and idle and dull? why do we look for excuses for not exercising—or even staying awake—and working on our reason?— [31] Well, if I go wrong in these matters, it’s not as if I’ve killed my father.—Slave, your father wasn’t there for you to kill.—So what did I do?—You made the only mistake which you could make in this area. [32] Actually I myself said the very same thing to Rufus when he criticized me because I hadn’t found the one omitted item in some syllogism. ‘Well,’ I said, ‘it’s not as if I’ve burned the Capitol down.’ ‘Slave,’ he said, ‘here the omitted item *is* the Capitol.’ [33] Are burning the Capitol and killing your father the only mistakes? Using your own impressions at random and in vain and at haphazard, not following an argument or a proof or a sophism, in general not seeing, in questioning and answering, what accords with your position and what does not—is none of this a mistake?

COMMENTARY

Title: Περί τῆς χρείας] ‘χρεία’ normally means ‘use’ in the sense of ‘utility’, not in the sense of ‘usage’ (which is ‘χρησις’: so, e.g., Aspasius, in *EN* 96.27-28); and so here (*pace* Long, Oldfather, Souilhé, Laurenti, Carter/Hard)—for the question at issue is not ‘How *do* we use such arguments?’ but ‘Why *should* we use them?’.

μεταπιπτόντων] The noun to be supplied or understood is ‘λόγων’ (see § 1); hence not ‘premisses’ (Oldfather—cf Carter/Hard) but ‘arguments’. The participle means ‘changing’; and that is how best to translate it. Certainly not ‘sophistical’ (Long) or ‘equivocal’ (Oldfather, Souilhé, Laurenti, Carter/Hard). The mistaken translations in this case betoken a failure to understand what a changing argument is; and the failure derives ultimately from Schweighäuser. His enormous note on the phrase ([*1799], II pp.94-102) runs through the various solutions which his predecessors had proposed for the difficulties which they found; and it ends with the lame assertion that changing arguments are arguments in which the sense of the premisses changes. There is nothing to be said for any of the early suggestions; and the only interesting questions which they raise concern their authors.

§ 1: ἔτι δὲ τῷ ἡρωτῆσθαι περαινόντας] These items are mentioned again at III ii 6 and xxi 10. At III xxi 10, all the MSS offer a definite article before ‘ἡρωτῆσθαι’; at III ii 6 none do. I cannot construe the phrase without an article (for a naked infinitive cannot depend on ‘περαινόντας’); hence I print ‘τῷ’ here, from the apographs—and Oldfather is right to add it at III ii 6. But that is a minor problem. The chief question concerns the sense of the phrase. In none of the three passages does Epictetus offer any gloss on it; and so far as I know neither the phrase itself nor anything like it occurs in any other ancient text on logic. What, then, does it mean?

In a certain sense *all* arguments ‘conclude by way of questioning’: premisses are frequently represented as ‘questions’ (or, better, as responses to real or imaginary questions). In Academic dialectical jousting one man asked another a question (a question which could be answered by ‘Yes’ or ‘No’); and his partner then argued from the question, that is to say from his answer to the question. Hence ‘ἐρωτᾶν’, ‘question’, comes to mean ‘initiate an argument’, ‘propound an argument’, ‘argue’; and it is used very frequently in this sense in ancient texts on logic. (In Latin the word comes out as ‘interrogare’.) But here Epictetus is plainly not referring to arguments in all their generality: he is inviting us to consider a particular *class* of arguments, a class whose members are distinct from but have some affinities with hypothetical arguments and changing arguments.

Schweighäuser [*1799], II pp.103-104, guessed that Epictetus refers to the Sorites: nothing tells for the suggestion, and something against it—we do not expect a particular sophism but a class of arguments. Hadot [1978], p.69 n.15, suggests that Epictetus is thinking of *dialectical* arguments, i.e. of arguments which take place between two interlocutors, as in Aristotle's *Topics*. But in I vii Epictetus plainly envisages changing arguments and hypothetical arguments as taking place within a dialectical context; and these arguments are set on a par with 'arguments which conclude by way of questioning' and are not special cases of such arguments. Hülser [*1987], pp.1518-1519, translates 'die Entwicklung gültiger Argumente': I do not see how anything like this can be twisted out of the Greek—and I have not the remotest idea what it might mean. Atherton [1993], pp.433-434, compares Diogenes Laertius, VII 44, where the word 'περαίνοντες' occurs in a list of sophisms; and she glosses the phrase 'τῷ ἡρωτήσθαι περαίνοντας' as 'those <arguments> one or more of whose constituent propositions change(s) truth-value as the argument is being posed'. This is at least the *sort* of thing which is wanted. But I doubt if the passage in Diogenes Laertius is pertinent (it lacks the crucial 'τῷ ἡρωτήσθαι')—and in any case the text is quite certainly corrupt. Moreover, on this suggestion arguments which conclude by way of questioning become difficult to distinguish from changing arguments. I have been tempted to take the word 'ἡρωτήσθαι' in its literal sense, and to imagine that Epictetus alludes to arguments in which the premisses are genuine questions. We know that Chrysippus did some work on imperative logic (see Barnes [1984]), and we know that he had some interest in questions (note a *Περὶ ἐρωτήσεως*: Diogenes Laertius, VII 191): hence he *could* have turned his hand to erotetic logic. But I am reluctant to believe that the Greek phrase can be paraphrased by 'valid arguments which contain questions among their premisses'.

The phrase surely ought to refer to arguments which are valid in virtue of the fact that they have been propounded. How could there be—or even seem to be—any such arguments? Well, there are assertibles which are true in virtue of the fact that they are expressed: consider the assertible expressed by the (stock) sentence 'I am conversing [ἐγὼ διαλέγομαι]'. And so an argument will be valid in virtue of the fact that it has been propounded if and only if its corresponding conditional is true in virtue of the fact that it has been expressed (see above, pp.102-103). It is not difficult to dream up examples of this sort of thing. Consider the argument:

If any utterance truly says that it is day, then it is day.
 This utterance truly says that it is day.

Therefore: it is day

If this argument is not propounded, then its second premiss will not subsist, since ‘This utterance’ will refer to nothing (see above, p.98). Hence, or so we may suppose, the corresponding conditional will not subsist, and *a fortiori* will not be true. Thus the corresponding conditional is true only if it is expressed, so that the argument will be valid only if it is propounded. It is easy to invent other parallel arguments. But though I suspect that this suggestion is along the right lines, it is no doubt profitless to develop it further.

τοὺς τοιούτους λόγους] Of what kind? (And what are ‘the like’ in the title?) Clearly, Epictetus must be thinking of types of arguments which pose the same sort of difficulties as those which he is going to discuss explicitly. But nothing encourages me to guess what these things might have been.

πραγματεία] The word sometimes means, concretely, ‘treatise’ (so Hülser [*1987], p.1517); but equally often it has the abstract sense of ‘treatment’, ‘study’—and so, plainly, here. (As in § 12, the only other occurrence of the word in Epictetus.)

§ 2: ἐπὶ πάσης ὕλης] For this use of ‘ὕλη’ see e.g. I iv 20; vi 34; xv 2; xxvi 2; xxix 41.

§ 3: οὐκοῦν ἢ τοῦτο λεγέτωσαν] I.e. ‘those people who do not realize that the study of changing arguments and the like is concerned with τὸ καθῆκον must accept one of two (unpalatable) options’. Why the options are unpalatable is indicated later, in §§ 25-27.

ἐρώτησιν καὶ ἀποκρίσιν] On ‘questions’ see above, p.136. The phrase ‘questions and answers’ is standardly used to distinguish dialectic from rhetoric—e.g. Alexander, in *Top* 5.7-9.

εἰκῇ] See e.g. I xxviii 29-30; II xii 22; III xv 7; PHerc 1020, ii 1-20 [= Hülser [*1987], frag 88]. The adverb is standardly used to characterize the way in which a philosopher should not speak or act: e.g. Aristotle, *Met* 984b17; Alexander, in *APr* 3.24-30.

§§ 3-4: ἀναστρέφεσθαι. μὴ τούτων] Schenkl (who emends the text at the beginning of § 4) places a comma after ἀναστρέφεσθαι and a full stop at the end of § 4. The MS text can, I think, be conserved if § 4 is punctuated as a question. (The use of ‘μή’ to introduce a question is common enough in Epictetus: e.g. I vii 31; II xxi 9; III xv 14.) In any case, the general sense of the paragraph is not in doubt.

§ 4: τῶν τόπων τούτων] For this use of ‘τόπος’ see above, pp.34-35. Laurenti takes ‘τούτων’ to refer back to the arguments of § 1. In that case we must give a strong sense to the verb ‘στρέφεται’—‘struggle with’; for it would be odd to say that logic is especially concerned with those rather esoteric areas. But the verb most probably has its usual weak sense (‘engage with’); and so we should construe ‘τούτων’ as the redundant antecedent of ‘οὓς’: the areas in question are (i) the judging of the truth of statements (§ 5), and (ii) the assessment of the validity of inferences (§ 9).

μάλιστα στρέφεται] The superlative adverb introduces, here as in many texts, an ambiguity: ‘logic deals with these areas more than it deals with any other areas’, or ‘logic, more than any other discipline, deals with these areas’. Presumably the latter interpretation is intended—other disciplines (psychology, rhetoric, ...) at least touch on the areas in question.

§ 5: τί γὰρ ἐπαγγέλλεται ἐν λόγῳ;] The sentence is doubly uncertain in sense. First, the verb ‘ἐπαγγέλλεται’ may be taken in more than one way: it might mean something like ‘promise’ (e.g. I iv 3; xv 2) and so be connected with the sort of ἐπαγγελία which is tantamount to meaning (above, p.29, n.29); or it might mean something like ‘advise’, ‘recommend’. The former view is intrinsically attractive; but the parallel occurrence in § 9 of ‘παρ-αγγέλλεται’, which presumably means ‘command’ or ‘enjoin’ (cf e.g. II ix 13), tells in favour of the second view. Secondly, the phrase ‘ἐν λόγῳ’ is irritatingly vague, and the version I have given is only one of several options. (See Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.106.) But here, too, the general sense is not in doubt.

τάληθῇ τιθέναι ... ἐπέχειν] I take the infinitives to have imperatival force: note the imperatives in § 9. For the sentiment see e.g. I xvii 1; xxviii 2.

§ 6: διότι ... ἀποδοκιμάζε] S offers two readings here. The version which Schenkl adopts gives ‘have heard why you accept ...’. This is unclear in itself, and it provides a poor parallel to the logical case. The other version makes everything intelligible. The point which Epictetus is making is this: it is not enough to know *that* it is imprudent to accept counterfeit coins—you

must also be able to *recognize* counterfeits when they are passed to you. For the grammar see e.g. I ii 18 ('ὅτι' introducing an imperative in *oratio recta*) with e.g. I xi 5 ('διότι' in the sense of 'ὅτι').

δραχμάς] For the analogy see e.g. I xx 8-10; II iii (above, p.83).

§ 7: τούτῳ προσλαβεῖν] For the dative see e.g. Musonius, frag I [p.2.13-14 Hense] = Stobaeus, *ecI* II xxxi 125.

δοκιμαστικὴν τε καὶ διακριτικὴν] For the combination of terms see e.g. I xx 7; for logic as a δυνάμις δοκιμαστική see I i 1; for 'διακριτικός' see e.g. I xvii 10.

§ 8: τὸ λεχθέν] Not 'the spoken word' (Oldfather—cf Carter/Hard). Epictetus means: it is not enough to know *that* you should accept what is true and reject what is false—you must also be able to *recognize* truths and falsities when they approach you.

δοκιμαστικὸν γενέσθαι] Epictetus alludes to the standard Stoic definition of logic—see e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VII 62 (with reference to Posidonius); Sextus, *PH* II 94; *M* XI 187. That is to say: you must acquire the capacity to discriminate among the true, the false, and the unclear; this capacity is in fact logic: therefore you must acquire logic.

§ 10: ποτέ μὲν ..., ποτέ δὲ ...] Oldfather prints 'ποτέ ... ποτέ ...' and translates 'πότε ... πότε ...'. – Epictetus means that you must learn in what cases a conclusion follows from a single premiss and in what cases a conclusion follows from a set of premisses. He does not indicate that there is anything untoward or exciting about this. But ancient logicians—including Chrysippus—generally denied that there were any valid single-premiss arguments (e.g. Alexander, in *APr* 17.10-18.6: Barnes *et al* [1991], pp.64-66). We hear of only one dissenting voice—that of Antipater (texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 1050-1057; see Barnes [1980], p.175; Burnyeat [1994], pp.46-48). Then did standard Stoic logic in Epictetus' time on at least one point prefer Antipater to Chrysippus?

The inference may seem audacious; but it receives some support from a passage in the *Encheiridion*.

These arguments are invalid [ἄσύνακτοι]:

I am richer than you.

Therefore: I am better than you.

I am more eloquent than you.

Therefore: I am better than you.

These, on the other hand, are valid [συνακτικοί]:

I am richer than you.

Therefore: my possessions are better than yours.

I am more eloquent than you.

Therefore: my diction is better than yours.

(*ench* 44)

(There is no parallel to this in the surviving *Discourses*: Schenkl's reference to III xiv 11 is inappropriate.) All four arguments are single-premised. It is hardly plausible to suppose that the examples were carelessly written and that Epictetus really held, after Chrysippus, that a valid argument must have two (or more) premisses. I suppose that he deliberately followed Antipater. And of course he was right to do so. (We know nothing of the arguments which induced Chrysippus to reject single-premised arguments—the surviving Peripatetic arguments to the same conclusion are embarrassingly silly.)

§ 11: καὶ τοῦτο] I.e. (I suppose): 'then you must also acquire the capacity to determine when one thing follows from another or from others'. (But Long takes 'τοῦτο' to refer forward to 'καὶ αὐτόν τ' ...'.)

ἀναστραφήσεσθαι καὶ αὐτόν τ'] The 'καί' after 'ἀναστραφήσεσθαι' I take to be exegetical: this perhaps makes the odd combination of particles ('καὶ ... τε ... καὶ ...') more tolerable—but I have found no precise parallel.

ἀποδείξειν ἕκαστα ἀποδόντα] The text has been doubted; but 'ἀπο-διδόναι' may mean 'define' (Sextus, *M* XI 8; Diogenes Laertius, VII 60; scholiast to Dionysius Thrax, 107.5—the definition of definition ascribed to Chrysippus). The definitions, I take it, are premisses or principles for proofs: the Sage must lay down his principles and then conduct proofs from them.

μηδ' ὑπὸ τῶν σοφισμένων ...] Cf below, § 26; I xxvii 6; and esp PHerc 1020 = Hülser [*1987], frag 88.

§ 12: τρόπων] 'τρόπος' is the technical Stoic term for an argument schema: see e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VII 76; Sextus, *M* VIII 227. And for 'συνάγειν'

in the sense of ‘be valid’ see e.g. Diogenes Laertius, VII 78; Sextus, *M* VIII 413.

§ 14: τὸ ψεῦδος] I.e. the false conclusion—Epictetus does not mean ‘fallacy’ (*pace* Oldfather).

§ 16: τὸ δανείσασθαι] For the example see I viii 2 (above, pp.31-32). – ‘διαλύειν’ is the technical term for ‘discharge a debt’; I have found no parallel for ‘ἐπιμένειν ἐπί’, but I suppose that that too was technical.

§ 18: μὴ μενόντων δέ ...] The supplement which Upton introduced from his codex and which Schweighäuser printed in an emended form (see [*1799], II pp.113-114) is evidently a learned guess—and a poor one. (On Upton’s ‘codex’—a miscellany of conjectures from various sources—see Schenkl [*1916], pp.LVII-LIX.) My supplement purports to give the general sense of the missing section, not the original words in which the sense was clothed.

§ 19: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔτι οὐδὲ καθ’ ἡμᾶς] ‘καθ’ ἡμᾶς’ is picked up in § 33 by ‘καθ’ αὐτόν’ (cf I xxviii 5). Epictetus does not mean ‘the conclusion no longer follows from the premisses’; he means that it no longer ‘results for us’, i.e. that it no longer follows from anything which we are obliged to accept. Oldfather and Carter/Hard make nonsense of the text.

§ 20: ἰστορήσαι] For ‘ἰστορήσαι’ see II xiv 28; III vii 1: the word means ‘look at’, ‘contemplate’—Epictetus does not say that we should survey or classify or give an account of changing premisses; merely that we should be on the *qui vive* for them. He does not tell us how to identify such premisses; but no doubt sentences which use temporal indexicals in certain ways will be likely to express pertinent assertibles. Sextus’ example contains the word ‘already [πρῶτον]’. It is easy to construct parallel cases with such terms as ‘not yet’, ‘only once’, ‘for the last time’, and so on.

One of the spurious items in the Chrysippean catalogue (above, p.99 n.288) is titled ‘Λόγοι μεταπίπτοντες πρὸς τὴν μεσότητα’. The phrase ‘πρὸς τὴν μεσότητα’ is puzzling. It is usually connected with a passage in Diogenes Laertius, VII 57, according to which Antipater introduced the μεσότης as a sixth ‘part of speech’ in addition to the five which Chrysippus and Diogenes of Babylon had recognized (proper name, appellative, verb, connector, article: further texts in Hülser [*1987], frags 536-549). Μεσότητες, in Antipater’s sense, are then taken to be adverbs; and in the pseudo-Chrysippean title ‘τὴν μεσότητα’ is translated as ‘adverb’ (so e.g. Hadot [1994], p.347—with a gloss: ‘plainly adverbs of time are in question’) or ‘temporal adverb’ (e.g. Hülser [*1987], p.181—cf Bobzien [1986], p.32).

All very splendid—but in fact there is no evidence at all for identifying Antipater's μεσότητες with temporal adverbs, and little enough for identifying them with adverbs. The word for 'adverb' in Dionysius Thrax, and in all the later Greek grammarians, is ἐπίρρημα, not μεσότης. (More precisely, an ἐπίρρημα is closer to a modern adverb—of which it is the ancestor—than it is to any other modern part of speech.) Dionysius lists 26 varieties of ἐπίρρημα (§ 19 [74.3]), and the second variety is described thus: τὰ δὲ μεσότητος <δηλωτικὰ> οἷον καλῶς σόφως. This short entry has puzzled modern scholars, as it puzzled ancient scholars (for whose implausible guesses see the scholia to Dionysius Thrax, *GG* I iii, 59.27-60.2; 97.31-98.5; 274.28-275.28; 429.34-430.7); but whatever may lie behind it, one thing is clear: ἐπίρρηματα of this sort are not temporal adverbs. (They are perhaps adverbs which terminate in -ως, or else, more specifically, adverbs which derive from adjectives and terminate in -ως.) Scholars have conjectured that the word μεσότης was earlier used as a generic term for 'adverb', and that ἐπίρρημα, a more transparent term, later supplanted it (see Ax [1991], pp.284-285; Schenkeveld [1993], pp.276-277). The scholia to Homer's *Iliad* use the term μεσότης a dozen or more times to designate a part of speech. In most of these cases, the part in question is clearly an adverb of Dionysius' second type (e.g. O 277a). The only passage I have noticed which might be thought to contain a designation of adverbs in general is I 446c: οὐ λέγει νέον κατὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἀλλὰ κατὰ μεσότητα ἀντὶ τοῦ νεωστὶ ἡβῶντα. But the scholiast may have taken 'νεωστὶ', an elongated form of 'νέως' (Herodian, *GG* III i, 536.19-22; III ii, 19.19-21; 464.11-14), to belong to Dionysius' second type. Simplicius reports that οἱ παλαιοὶ used the word πῶσις of many different items, including τὰς νῦν καλουμένας μεσότητας (*in Cat* 37.12-13—cf 208.17-20); and at 388.19-27 he may implicitly ascribe this use of the word μεσότης to the Stoics. But it is not clear what sense Simplicius himself gives the word; and all his examples ('ἀνδρείως', 'καλῶς', 'φρονίμως', 'ἀφρόνως') are in fact adverbs of Dionysius' second type. This is, at best, frail evidence that the word μεσότης originally designated adverbs in general; and I know of no stronger evidence.

Nonetheless, it will be demanded, what else could Antipater's μεσότητες have been if it was not an adverb? Well, a pronoun (which the early Stoics did not distinguish from a name) or a preposition (which they did not distinguish from a connector) or a participle (which they did not distinguish from a verb)—cf scholia to Dionysius Thrax, *GG* I iii, 356.7-16. Participles, for example, might readily be thought of as 'means' between nouns and verbs (cf Plutarch, *quaest Platon* 1011C: a participle or μετοχή considered as a μῖγμα ῥήματος ... καὶ ὀνόματος; Dionysius Thrax, § 15 [60.1-2]: λέξις μετχουσα τῆς τῶν ῥημάτων καὶ τῆς τῶν ἁπλῶν ιδιότητος; Priscian, *inst* XI

1: *participium* ... *ex utroque* [sc *nomen* and *verbum*] *nascitur*; cf scholia to Dionysius Thrax, *GG* I iii 254.27-32). Or I wonder if Diogenes has not garbled his material: in the grammarians, ‘μεσότης’ is a standard term for the middle voice (e.g. Dionysius Thrax, § 13 [48.1-49.3]): perhaps Antipater distinguished the middle from the active and the passive voices, and his insight was misconstrued as the discovery of a new part of speech.

In sum, I do not think that we know what Antipater did—and we are certainly in no position to interpret the pseudo-Chrysippean titles.

μετάπτωσιν αὐτῶν] Not ‘modified meanings’ (Oldfather—after Long)—see § 1.

ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἐρωτήσει ...] I.e. ‘a premiss may change [sc. its truth-value] while you are offering me a potential premiss or while I am accepting it or while I am inferring something from what I have accepted and so on’. I do not understand the perfect tense of ‘συλλελογίσθαι’. The final ‘etc’ is also puzzling: what else could Epictetus have in mind? My *assenting* to the conclusion, once I have drawn it? My *using* the conclusion as a premiss in a further argument?

ἢ τινι ἄλλῳ τοιούτῳ] The received text may stand, *pace* Schenkl, who obelizes. See Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.115.

ταράσσεσθαι βλέπουσι] According to the MS reading, the foolish get upset when (or because) they do *not* see what follows. But surely they get in a state precisely because they *do* see what follows? They see that something follows from what they have correctly conceded; and they also see that this thing is false. Hence their perplexity. (I cannot see that the occurrence of ‘βλέπειν’ in § 33 helps to defend the received text; nor is it plausible to construe ‘τὸ ἀκόλουθον’ in a loose sense—it picks up ‘τὸ ἀκόλουθον’ in § 17.)

§ 22: καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ] For the parallelism between the case of hypotheticals and the case of changing arguments see above, p.107 n.303; and compare § 19 with § 24.

αἰτῆσαι τινα ὑπόθεσιν] For hypotheses as ‘postulates’ see e.g. Sextus, *M* III 4; Proclus, in *Eucl* 76.24-77.3.

ἐπιβάθραν] Epictetus is thinking of Plato, *rep* 511B (‘ἐπίβασις’)—cf *Symp* 211C (‘ἐπαναβαθμός’).

§ 23: *περὶ ... καθήκοντος*] Wolf's deletion, which Schenkl accepts, is hard to resist. It would, to be sure, be tolerable to have a further reminder that we are still concerned with *τὸ καθήκον* (cf § 13); but the form which the reminder takes in the MSS is intolerable. – The train of thought in §§ 23-24 is, to say the least, abrupt. Epictetus offers no answer to the question raised in § 23, and he begins § 24 with an entirely new question. I suspect that in place of the phrase which Wolf deleted there originally stood an answer to the question of § 23.

§ 25: *ὁ φρόνιμος*] Not 'a prudent young man' (Carter/Hard). 'φρόνιμος', like 'σόφος' and 'σπουδαῖος', is a standard designation for the Sage.

§ 26: *δεινὸς ἐν ἐρωτήσει*] 'δεινός' with a bare dative is hard to parallel; and Meibom's addition is now supported by PHerc 1020, ii 4.

ἀνεξαπάτητος] See I iv 11; III v 7; PHerc 1020, i 1-6.

§ 27: *ἐπινοοῦμεν*] Not 'think' (Oldfather, Laurenti, Carter/Hard): Epictetus means—as § 29 ('*πρόληψις*') shows—that indifference to logical propriety is inconsistent with the concept of a wise man.

§ 30: *ἀγρυπνήσομεν*] Cf e.g. II xxi 19; III xv 11; IV i 176; ix 16; and see Hijmans [1959], pp.68-70.

ἐξεργαζόμενοι τὸν ... λόγον] Cf e.g. III ix 20 (above, p.64); xv 13; IV x 13.

§ 32: According to Hirzel [1895], p.246 n.1, this little exchange shows that Epictetus started life as a Cynic and was converted to Stoicism by Musonius. I cannot for the life of me see why Hirzel makes this inference.

τὸ παραλειπόμενον ἐν ἐν συλλογισμῷ τινι οὐχ εὑρίσκον] Presumably Epictetus is referring to a logical exercise: the teacher offers the pupil an enthymematic argument, and he has to 'find the missing premiss'. Compare the (technical) use of '*τὸ παραλειπόμενον*' at Alexander, in *Top* 9.16 (cf 15.4; 32.23); Galen, *nat fac* II 95-96 Kühn (cf *art sang* IV 710 Kühn; *PHP* V 257 Kühn, 258 Kühn, etc); Simplicius, in *ench* XXXV 527 Hadot; and note '*πράλειψις*' at e.g. Sextus, *PH* II 150.

τὸ Καπιτώλιον κατέκαυσα] A stock example, according to Upton, *apud* Schweighäuser [*1799], II p.120. Even if the example is not a *topos*, we hardly need see an explicit allusion to the fire of 69 (or 80), *pace* Millar [1965].

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The Bibliography lists, first, the texts and translations of Epictetus which I have used; secondly, editions of various other ancient texts; and thirdly, the items of modern literature to which I have referred. It is not a bibliography of work on Epictetus, nor of work on Stoic logic; but it does contain—to the best of my knowledge—everything pertinent to Epictetus' attitude to Stoic logic.

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